



BRITISH GAS

Tell Sid that
the party's over

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The Nutcracker

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THE TIMES

No. 64,519

FRIDAY DECEMBER 18 1992

45p

Blindfolded Palestinians on a one-way bus journey into exile



Expelled: Palestinians from the Gaza Strip slump in their seats as guards wait for the order to wave their bus across the Israeli frontier into Lebanon yesterday

Expulsions put Israel peace talks at risk

By MARTIN FLETCHER
AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

ISRAELI buses carrying deported Palestinians crossed into Lebanon last night and took with them the hopes of continuing the Middle East peace talks.

The Israeli supreme court's decision to allow the expulsions to go ahead came in spite of an appeal by President Bush and warnings from Arab negotiators that the expulsions could "deal a death blow" to the talks. Mr Bush, in a statement issued after he had met Arab and Israeli delegates to the negotiations, urged the parties to keep talking. He said Arabs and Israelis should stop all forms of violence "and avoid such reactions as deportations that risk complicating the search for peace".

Earlier, Lawrence Eagleburger, the Secretary of State, had expressed strong objections to deportations. The Palestinians, Syrians and Jordanians boycotted yesterday's peace talks with Israel. Haidar Abdel-Shafi, the chief Palestinian negotiator, said that unless the deportation order was rescinded, it would be impossible to continue the talks.

Hardliners deported, page 9

Nato alert as Serbs threaten UK troops

By GEORGE BROCK,
MICHAEL EVANS
AND PHILIP WEBSTER

NATO is ready to take military action to help the United Nations to enforce the "no-fly" zone over Bosnia-Herzegovina. The declaration from the alliance's foreign ministers last night came in direct defiance of an ultimatum from the leader of the Bosnian Serbs, who yesterday wrote to John Major threatening to attack British soldiers if Western combat aircraft became involved in the conflict.

Radevoan Karadzic, whose self-declared Serb republic in Bosnia yesterday claimed to be unilaterally ending the "ethnic religious war", said in his letter that if the "no-fly" zone were enforced by Western aircraft, UN troops on the ground would be declared hostile and be in danger of attack. The ultimatum was immediately rejected by the prime minister, who made clear that he would not be intimidated.

That view was reinforced by the Nato ministers meeting in Brussels who pronounced their willingness to support the UN in enforcing a ban on flights over the republic. Their statement did not elaborate on how that might be done, but

John Major's defiance of a Serbian ultimatum suggests that Western aircraft may soon start enforcing the 'no fly' zone over Bosnia

Britain's Douglas Hurd said that the UN Security Council would issue the enforcement resolution "reasonably soon". He added, however: "That is not to say it will be implemented immediately."

Lawrence Eagleburger, the American secretary of state, added that aid convoys might have to be halted while air strikes were carried out. If the UN passed a resolution authorising force to be used against Serb aircraft, implementing it "might have to take precedence over the question of delivering aid for a short period of time," he said.

Mr Hurd and Mr Eagleburger spoke after a strained meeting that sharply exposed the differences between the British and American approaches to the next stage of the Balkan conflict. There is a degree of annoyance that the Americans have suddenly become so bullish when they have no troops in Bosnia. Their only presence on the ground consists of 15

officers on the staff of the UN Bosnian command headquarters at Kiseljak, 20 miles west of Sarajevo. Mr Major is expected to underline this point as diplomatically as he can when he meets President Bush today for a weekend of talks that will almost certainly pave the way for a UN resolution next week.

The prime minister clearly hopes that such a resolution will be enough to persuade the Serbs to back off, although ministers accept that if that does not happen, the allies will have to face up to enforcing it. Malcolm Rifkind, the defence secretary, does not believe that a case has been made out for increasing the 2,400-strong British force, but senior officials say that if British resolve were put to the test, it would not be found wanting.

In writing to Mr Major yesterday, Dr Karadzic was seeking to exploit the divisions between countries with troops serving in Bosnia and those that have not contributed any

combat forces. Although his warnings have been greeted with angry contempt, they highlight precisely the fears expressed by Mr Major, Mr Hurd and Mr Rifkind. In his letter, Dr Karadzic claimed that he would not be able to control his troops on the ground if they saw their aircraft shot down. If that happened, the UN would be wise to withdraw all its ground troops, he wrote.

"If it is decided that the UN security council resolution should be enforced by the use of force, and if this results in the destruction of our helicopters, the parliament of the republic will almost certainly declare all UN forces as hostile. I think we should have contingency arrangements to evacuate all UN ground troops currently serving in the Serbian controlled parts of Bosnia-Herzegovina as quickly as possible."

The letter, which was also sent to Boutros Boutros Ghali, the UN secretary general, was Dr Karadzic's second such warning this week. On Wednesday, he declared in Geneva that any shooting down of Serbian aircraft would be treated as an act of war.

West's page, page 10
Leading article, page 15

South-East jobless total hits record 10%

By PHILIP BASSETT
INDUSTRIAL EDITOR

ONE in ten of the workforce in the South-East is now out of work, according to figures released yesterday. Unemployment nationally has risen to more than 2.9 million. The government admitted that the increase was discouraging, while Labour said it would be a dismal Christmas for those out of work.

In the South-East, one of the areas hardest hit by the recession, the unemployment rate topped 10 per cent for the first time. The rate of 10.1 per cent represents 916,800 people. Unemployment in the South-East has risen by a quarter in the past year, compared to a national average rise of 15.5 per cent. In London the total is

FALLING OUT

Six hundred army officers will be redundant because there are not enough lieutenant-colonels volunteering to leave. Page 2

458,300 — an even higher rate of 11.3 per cent, also the highest on record. Only the North of England, at 11.6 per cent, and Northern Ireland, at 14.6 per cent are worse off. In Northern Ireland the total fell for the third month prompting speculation that the region last to go into recession might be the first out.

Nationally, seasonally-adjusted unemployment rose in November by 41,100, to 2,908,900, the highest for five and a half years. Government statisticians expect unemployment to continue to rise at about 32,000 a month. The total looks likely to top the strategically important level of 3 million early in the new year.

£1 lottery will make millionaires

BRITAIN'S new national lottery, which could make someone a millionaire every week for the cost of a £1 ticket, was unveiled yesterday.

Publishing the National Lottery Bill, Peter Brooke, the national heritage secretary, said the proceeds from the lottery, due to start in 1994, would not be a substitute for public spending on the arts, sports and heritage. A Downing Street spokesman described it as a "Christmas present for the nation".

An estimated £1.5 billion worth of lottery tickets will be bought each year, yielding £14 million worth of prizes a week and £350 million a year for good causes.

Football pools companies, however, said the lottery could put more than 1,000 jobs at risk.

Job promises, page 2

Cambridge researchers beat Oxford challenge

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

CAMBRIDGE University yesterday established a clear lead over its ancient rival Oxford in the most extensive university research rankings carried out in Britain.

The official assessment of 43,000 academics' research will be used to distribute more than £650 million to university departments next year. Those with the lowest rating will have no access to the new higher education funding councils' main research budgets.

Traditional universities, which previously received automatic funding for research, dominated the rankings of 72 different subjects. A media studies research centre of five academics at Westminster University, the former Polytechnic of Central London, was the sole representative of the new universities in the top category. Forty of the 52 units entered by Cambridge achieved the maximum score, compared with 28 of the 45 Oxford entries. University College London had 22 top-rated units out of 43.

Dr Anne Lonsdale, Oxford's director of external relations, said the university had reservations about the exercise. "There are one or two areas where we are surprised by the results. We certainly do not think that the substance of the work is accurately reflected but it is up to us to look at how we set about it."

None of the Oxbridge units assessed scored less than three out of five points, indicating that most research was of national standing. All 3,000 academics will continue to be eligible for research funding. Warwick had the best average score among the provincial universities, although Nottingham equalled its record of 11 top-rated units. Both finished ahead of traditional Oxbridge alternatives such as Bristol and Durham. Edinburgh was the most successful Scottish university.

Professor Graeme Davies, chairman of the Universities Funding Council, which carried out the exercise, said that he expected criticism but the rankings represented "informed peer review". He added: "If we are committed to quality, then we must be prepared to be measured, and that is what this is all about."

The assessment showed a rise in the quality of research in the traditional universities since their last assessment three years ago. The new universities, included for the first time, had some notable successes, but registered most of the low scores.

One former polytechnic, the University of Central England at Birmingham, did not enter any academics for assessment and others have complained that the exercise did not reflect the applied nature of their work and lack of previous funding. Professor Davies said that the assessment showed sound research in many new universities, and several million pounds was being made available to develop areas of potential.

More than 450 leading researchers and non-academic experts assessed the research.

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Scots MPs force Commons to suspend business

BY OUR POLITICAL STAFF

ON THE last day of term, Scottish MPs arranged a little Christmas pantomime that threw business in the House of Commons into chaos yesterday. Senior Tory figures angrily denounced the "wild men of Scotland" for ambushing the final sitting before the holiday and for forcing the Speaker to take the rare action of suspending business for nearly three hours.

More than a dozen MPs forced the suspension as they demonstrated against government plans allowing Scottish hospitals to opt out of health board control. Tory figures were quick to blame John Smith, calling on the Labour leader to take action to prevent MPs from stage-managing further protests to disrupt debate. One senior Tory said: "John Smith is very worried about the effect the wild men of Scotland might have on his party's reputation. He has got to get them under control."

The suspension arose as the government announced that eight out of the 14 applicants for National Health Service trust status in Scotland were being approved. Scottish Labour members demanded a ministerial statement and, when it became clear that there would not be one, a group of 12 MPs stood directly in front of the mace.

The protest was a more vociferous repetition of a demonstration by Scottish MPs

that disrupted the Commons on the final day of the last parliamentary session, in July. One Tory MP said that such demonstrations "are away at the very heart of democracy. If we can stop debate whenever we disagree, there is no point having elected representatives."

Yesterday's dispute brought



Smith: urged to keep MPs under control

to the boil a simmering argument between the two main parties over what Tories say is Scotland's over-representation. Under strict proportional rules, Scotland would have 10 MPs fewer than the 72 current ones, the majority of whom are Labour.

With Tom Clarke, Labour's shadow Scottish secretary, away through illness, Tories fear that some Labour MPs

will feel increasingly frustrated that the party's huge domination in Scotland is not adequately represented.

English Tories who missed the opportunity to raise other issues in the Commons after yesterday's suspension, said that they were furious at the "deeply serious disruption of the proceedings of Parliament". David Nicholson, Conservative MP for Taunton, who had been hoping to speak in a debate on council spending, said: "It is a sinister development and very sad that it should have happened at Christmas, when we should have left here in a spirit of goodwill."

David Mabel, Conservative MP for Bedfordshire South West, who was due to speak on loss of manufacturing jobs in his constituency, described the loss of his motion as "a wretched way to end the year. My constituents are very angry about it, as am I." Gary Waller (C. Keighley) complained of the irony that the protest over the National Health Service might have deprived him of his last chance to protest at the proposed closure of a hospital in his constituency.

There is no recent precedent for most of the day's business to be wiped out because of a protest by a group of MPs. The Labour protesters said that they were angry at the announcements about the

future of Scottish hospitals being made public in the press rather than through a statement to the Commons.

There were also complaints from Tories that Betty Boothroyd, the Speaker, had not been tough enough in stopping the trouble from getting out of control. MPs said that the "naming" of one or more MPs, meaning that they would be barred from the Commons for several days when Parliament resumes next month, could have stopped the furore. "There have been cases like this in the past and the naming of MPs has prevented things getting out of hand," one senior Tory said.

Hints of yesterday's trouble had reached Scottish journalists on Wednesday and it became clear, during the morning that something was brewing when Scottish MPs raised a series of points of order during what was expected to be a routine end-of-session day with a series of short debates, mainly on local issues.

Michael Morris, the deputy Speaker, found himself increasingly under pressure as Labour MPs refused to bow to his rulings and eventually staged a demonstration by standing in front of the mace in a gesture of defiance. Before suspending the sitting for ten minutes, he said: "I imagine you have got enormous coverage by now."

When the sitting resumed shortly after noon, Miss Boothroyd took the chair and, after hearing points of order and renewed demands for a ministerial statement, she suspended the sitting until 3pm, the scheduled time for the Christmas recess.

About 40 MPs had gathered in the chamber and, despite an attempt by Maria Fyfe, a Labour frontbencher, to raise a point of order, Miss Boothroyd announced the royal assent to several acts and swiftly adjourned the Commons until January 11.

The press, on the instructions of the Sir Alan Urwick, Sergeant at Arms, were immediately cleared from their gallery. The public gallery was empty for the minute-long exercise. The mace was removed and MPs formally began their three-week Christmas recess.

Riddell on politics, page 8

'It will create jobs, millionaires and museums'

LOTTERY

Brooke vows lottery will soothe all ills

BY SHEILA GUNN AND ALISON ROBERTS

BRITAIN'S first state-sponsored lottery for 300 years will create millionaires, museums and harmless fun for the nation, Peter Brooke, the national heritage secretary, promised yesterday.

Publishing the national lottery bill, Mr Brooke said the use of proceeds for arts, sports, heritage, charities and the Millennium Fund would not be a substitute for public spending.

He said an estimated £1.5 billion worth of lottery tickets would be bought each year, creating £14 million worth of prizes every week and about £350 million a year for good causes. A weekly jackpot prize of £1 million is to be offered, with tickets likely to cost about £1.

However, football pools companies yesterday warned that more than 1,000 jobs were now at risk. Malcolm Hughes, managing director of Vernons Pools, said that both Zetters and Vernons would not survive the lottery in its proposed form. Mr Brooke's insistence that the lottery would not draw customers away from the pools was "nonsense", he said.

"As presented, this bill will only lead to continuing uncertainty and anxiety among our workforce in the north-west. In the current economic climate this is unpardonable," he said.

In an effort to defuse opposition, Mr Brooke said the lottery, due to start in 1994, would create a new private sector business, new jobs and new work for existing firms. "It opens up a wealth of exciting new opportunities. It will create millionaires and museums."

He was considering con-

cessions to appease the pools lobby, but said that "talk of a level playing field is misplaced".

The Sports Council welcomed the bill, however, calling it "tremendously good news for sport at all levels". Lottery money for arts organisations will be distributed by the Arts Council, which said no less than a third of the turnover must be set aside for good causes.

Mr Brooke did not say how large a slice of revenue sport and the arts should expect. He is still negotiating the tax to be levied with estimates now hovering around 15 per cent. Administration costs are also unknown. Britain is the only European country without some form of national lottery and, as trade barriers are lowered next year, other countries will be able to operate lotteries in Britain.

Mr Brooke is also to relax regulations on lotteries run by voluntary bodies and local authorities.

"The lottery will help fund all sorts of projects, from new swimming pools and sports complexes to new theatres and arts centres," said Mr Brooke. "The lottery would be an extra source of money for projects which might never be realised otherwise."

Bids for Millennium Fund cash are already being put forward. The Tate Gallery wants funds to build a museum of modern art in London and the £250 million Royal Opera House development badly needs funds.

The bill, which Mr Brooke wants to become law by August, is expected to be bitterly fought in Parliament by those worried about state-sponsored gambling.



Taking a gamble Peter Brooke expects opposition

Oflot watchdog will ensure fair play

BY SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

ONE of the original wooden chests used in the million lottery, first held in 1694, had pride of place in the Treasury yesterday when the bill to set up the national lottery was published. The 17th-century lottery helped raise public money to fight the French.

The national lottery, due to start operation 300 years later, in 1994, will be privately run and strictly regulated, distributing funds for arts, sports, heritage, charities and the Millennium

Fund for projects marking the year 2000. Peter Brooke, the heritage secretary, expects the bill to become law by the summer recess.

The key powers will lie with a director-general, appointed for a five-year term, of an Office of the National Lottery (Ofnl) which is to check the propriety of the national lottery, protect the interests of ticket buyers and make sure that it raises the maximum amount for good causes. He or she will license one main

operator, and smaller firms, to run games. Operators could be required to hand over a "performance bond" to protect the interests of prize winners.

The director-general will sanction the types of games allowed and set out conditions for licences.

The bill eases regulations on charities' and councils' lotteries by raising prize limits from £12,000 to £25,000, and the maximum turnover allowed on any one lottery from £180,000 to £250,000.

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Cold, fear and Serb gunfire surround asylum victims

Continued from page 1

relative safety with a 16-ton lorry of aid from the UK charity Feed the Children.

The greatest danger now is not the Serbs, only a few hundred yards away, but the temperature that will plunge to -20C next month and in February. For these people, Christmas might be happening on another planet.

Nationalism barely features here in the struggle to survive. Danilo Sladoje, the hospital director, is a Serb. Zijad Korjenic, the social worker, is Bosnian. Other staff are Croats. The patients are equally mixed.

Some aid has got through already. British troops of the United Nations, including men of The 9th/12th Lancers, The Royal Irish Regiment and The Cheshires carried the heaters and blankets that we saw at the hospital. The Dutch army has also taken in aid. But Feed the Children was the first British charity to get through to the asylum. Mr

Sladoje said: "First we do not have electricity. Then there is no heating. There is no underwear, no fuel. We need wood and coal." In Bosnia, he said, nearly all the patients in another frontline mental institution, all women and children, were feared dead. Mr Korjenic, aged 29, has been at the hospital for eight months and can still scarcely believe what has happened. "This is a war of crazy people. Chemists sent a lot of shells here, 30,000 shells. We have had so many we are no longer afraid."

He showed us the hospital work rooms. Half-finished tapestries, woven decorations and other needlework littered the deserted room, too cold to work in. Patients were crowded into one of two rooms, huddled together around small tables for warmth, or in beds curled under a blanket.

Before the war, this hospital was known throughout the former Yugoslavia as a model institution for people born

with a mental handicap. It had advanced programmes of tuition and social care and expert medical help on hand. Now, in contrast to most mental institutions which are filled with good-natured shouting and general noise, these inmates had been stunned into silent, uncomprehending despair. Their plight and their response to the war adds to the surreal atmosphere around eastern Bosnia, with desperate men begging us for cigarettes, shaving cream or simply human attention.

The Charities Aid Foundation will be responsible for all aspects of banking and donation costs of 1st AID. Donations can be made by telephoning the credit card line, 0272-226688 (24 hours); cheque/postal order payable to 1st AID and sent to 1st AID Appeal, c/o CAF Freepost, TN 2257, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN2 5BR; or over the counter at any Bradford & Bingley Building Society or Midland Bank branch.

Mozart may have had Tourette's syndrome

By NICK NUTTALL
TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT



Mozart: noted for his eccentricity

a 19th-century French neurologist.

Mozart's contemporaries noted his enthusiasm for such words as muck and piddle, but his swearing was previously attributed to the popularity of expletives in Salzburg. Mozart's birthplace, and within his own family. A new analysis of

Mozart and his family's published letters, however, casts doubt on this view, finding few examples of scatological in the letters of Mozart's father, sister and mother.

Mozart, in contrast, made reference to excrement, urination and other unsavoury subjects in nearly 40 of his 371 letters. In total, says Dr Simkin, about 17 per cent of Mozart's correspondence bears the mark of Tourette's syndrome.

The research also links the writing of such letters with important events in Mozart's life, indicating that the source of his genius might have been connected with the disease.

For example, some of the bizarre and vulgar writings appear during the summer and autumn of 1791, when Mozart was writing his last two big operas and his Requiem in Vienna.

Dr Simkin, whose research is published in the *British*

Medical Journal, backs up his claims with the accounts of witnesses and other documentary evidence.

Family friends said Mozart's body was "perpetually in motion... he would play incessantly with his hands or tap restlessly on the floor with his feet".

Sophie Haibel, his sister-in-law, said: "Even when he was washing his hands in the morning, he walked up and down... never standing still. At table he would often twist up a corner of a napkin and rub his upper lip with it, and he often made extraordinary grimaces with his mouth."

Others said he was obsessed with such nonsense words as "organia figurata", and between 1786 and 1790 frequently used the word "misaw".

In 1777 Joseph Lange, his brother-in-law, received a letter from the composer in which he described singing

with someone called Father Emilian. "I took the third voice... Pater Emilian, oh you idiot, you lick my arse, I beg you," Mozart wrote.

Oliver Sacks, professor of clinical neurology at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, also writing in the journal, says Dr Simkin's research provides some evidence that Mozart had the disease. He notes that some sufferers can put its effects to good creative use - one modern victim joined a band as a drummer, winning acclaim for his "sudden and wild" improvisations.

COMET

Sinn Fein commands around 10 per cent of the total vote in Northern Ireland, not 10 per cent of the republican-nationalist vote as reported yesterday.

كندا، لاس

Fitness teacher returns safe after 'sinister' disappearance

BY JULIA LLEWELLYN SMITH

POLICE were last night investigating the 36-hour disappearance of Joanna Grenside, an aerobics instructor who was found safe but "very distressed" yesterday. Miss Grenside told police she was kidnapped by a man who kept her blindfolded in his home and never said a word throughout her ordeal.

The 25-year-old, who disappeared on Tuesday night in Harpenden, Hertfordshire, walked into the leisure centre where she worked just before 7am yesterday. She had been left in a nearby park. Police said that she may have been assaulted.

Her sister Lucy, 21, a physical education student at Loughborough University, said that Miss Grenside told police she was grabbed from behind, gagged and put in a car. "She was driven to a house and she thinks that it was probably outside Harpenden because of the time it



Joanna Grenside: captor never spoke

took to get there. But she really doesn't know much about the man because he never spoke for any of the time. It was sinister.

"She has been through an awful ordeal. But it has also been an ordeal for her mother and for myself." But she added: "It is the best result we could have hoped for."

Chief Inspector Ian Whinnett, heading the inquiry, said: "The young lady is in a very, very distressed state

and we are still pursuing our enquiries along the line that she was abducted." He said she was so upset that it could be days before she was able to give an account of the 36 hours involved. "The only witness we have is Joanna and until we can speak to her and give her time to unwind from what was a very traumatic experience we can give no further details."

Miss Grenside was examined by a police doctor before returning home to her family. Yesterday afternoon she was being interviewed by two specially trained police constables.

Police used a helicopter, divers and tracker dogs in the search for Miss Grenside after she failed to arrive for an aerobics class she was due to teach. The alarm was raised by her boyfriend Dennis Davis, who is also a fitness instructor at the centre, which is two minutes drive from Miss Grenside's home. Her locked Ford Escort was found parked 100 yards from the centre with her rape alarm, issued by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust, nearby.

When she arrived at the centre yesterday, Miss Grenside was wearing the green sweatshirt and trousers she had on when she went missing.

Wendy Lloyd, the leisure centre manager, said she did not appear to have eaten and was given some toast. "We are relieved but we are still in a state of shock," she said. Keith Parker, the operations manager, said: "Thank God she is alive. The whole of the staff is elated to get her back."

Miss Grenside has lived with her mother Penny and her two sisters since returning from Australia a year ago. Her sister Emma, 27, said: "We are of course very delighted, and relieved that Joanna has been found. We are all very shocked at the moment."

Her grandfather, Christopher Grenside, 85, said: "I am delighted. We had all feared the worst."

Shipwreck survivors condemn French government's salvage offer

Titanic sale attacked as grave robbing

BY MICHAEL HORSNELL

RELICS salvaged from the wreck of the *Titanic* are being offered for sale by the French government to the few remaining survivors of the tragedy and to descendants of the victims. The move has provoked outrage in Britain.

Two hundred artifacts from a treasure trove of 900 items taken from the ship by French divers five years ago were released for sale yesterday by the marine ministry in Paris. Victims' families, who will have to establish proof of ownership, will be given first choice at undisclosed prices which are understood to be up to £2,000 an item.

The offer, which will be available to relatives for three months only, could open a series of legal battles over ownership. A huge number of personal claims for loss of property were met by insurance companies at the time.

Eva Hart, 87, a survivor of the disaster, said yesterday: "I am absolutely appalled. It was disgusting enough in the first place that these items were brought up. This is grave robbery and it is revolting. Only the French could do this." Miss Hart still vividly remembers waving goodbye to her father for the last time after she had been lowered into a lifeboat.

Millvina Dean, 80, was the youngest survivor of the disaster at eight weeks old. She said: "It is quite disgusting that the wreck has been rifled. It should have been allowed to rest in peace. Now they are selling off the spoils. How can they do this?"

The "unsinkable" White Star liner hit an iceberg in mid-Atlantic on April 14, 1912, with the loss of about 1,500 lives on her maiden voyage from Southampton to New York.

The French embassy in London said that applicants should write to it or the Secretariat of State for the Sea in Paris, which has catalogues of the objects. It is understood that the intention is to help pay for the salvage operation,



Collision course: an impression of the *Titanic's* last moments. Artifacts are on sale to pay for the salvage work

which is believed to have cost about £4 million.

The list of items makes sorrowful reading: a pipe with sculpted bowl, four teaspoons with support with the initials RLB, a heart-shaped pendant with gems, a leather case containing spectacles, a jar with cream, two Gillette razor blades boxes with blades, a shaving brush, a shoe brush, a natural toilet sponge.

A huge battle for salvage of the ship followed its discovery in 1985. It is believed that only the French have brought any artifacts to the surface.



Eva Hart: "This is grave robbery"



Lost luggage: a relic from the disaster 80 years ago

Boy, 8, is beaten 'for not joining shoplifters'

BY NICHOLAS WATT

A MOTHER said last night that she could barely recognise her eight-year-old son after he was allegedly beaten up, burnt with cigarettes and doused with petrol when he refused to shoplift with two youths. The boy was found in a gutter in Leeds on Wednesday night by a stranger.

The boy's mother said yesterday: "I couldn't believe it when I saw him. He was black and blue all over and I could barely recognise him. He looked half dead."

She said that he was bruised down the side of his face, on his back and on the right side of his legs. His head looked deformed and was swollen on one side.

The boy was allegedly abducted from the Crossgates shopping centre in Leeds on Wednesday night and taken to a shed where two youths poured petrol over him after torturing him.

His mother said: "They dragged him to a shed with a plastic bag over his head and then locked him in and just beat him all over his body. They threatened to set him on fire but they didn't, thank God."

"They then left him for dead and locked the door behind them but he managed to get out. A woman saw him on the side of the road and he was able to tell her where he lived. He was too weak to struggle home."

The eight-year-old, from the Swardcliffe area of Leeds, was in a stable condition in hospital yesterday. His mother said: "When the bruises have gone the torment will remain. He is a very scared lad and he is frightened that they will come after him again. But once I get him home I am going to concentrate on giving him the best Christmas I can."

Detective Inspector Keith Lawrence, who is leading the enquiry, said: "The offence was of an extremely violent nature, particularly in respect of the age of the child involved."

Two 12-year-old youths appeared at the city's youth court yesterday and were remanded into the care of the local authority until Christmas eve accused of causing grievous bodily harm.

Drugs and alcohol taken openly, says report

Gangsters controlled no-go areas in top-security prison

BY RICHARD FORD, HOME CORRESPONDENT

GANGSTERS controlled parts of a top-security jail in which drug-taking and illegal drinking were widespread, according to a report published today.

Serious weaknesses were found in security at Long Lartin jail, Hereford and Worcester, which held 21 Category A prisoners, including IRA terrorists, a Libyan hitman and a Sicilian drugs baron. The report says that the jail, opened in 1971, is unsuitable for high-risk prisoners.

Hard drugs were widespread, alcohol was being brewed and drunk in the jail and a minority of London criminals intimidated staff

and other prisoners, the report by Judge Tumim, the chief inspector of prisons, says. It was rumoured that pushers in the jail offered new inmates free drugs.

During an inspection almost 12 months ago, Judge Tumim found that certain parts had become "no-go" areas for staff and that the balance of control had tilted in favour of the 410 prisoners.

"The regime, good order, organisation and morale of Long Lartin were in crisis." Control over unlawful or unruly activity had been eroded to an alarming degree. White London gangsters were able to threaten the day-to-day maintenance of good order and, in one wing, they "permitted" only non-threatening ethnic minority prisoners, usually Asians, to join them if they carried out menial tasks.

Some prisoners claimed that it was easier to get hard drugs inside Long Lartin than outside. While the inspection took place, an inmate had been found with a large quantity of heroin. "The prison was suffering from an epidemic of hard drug-taking," the report says. "Incidents of discovery of large quantities of drugs were frequent, while stories of substance abuse abounded."

Judge Tumim says that the

confidence of the prison staff had been so crippled that they avoided confrontation with inmates and that some officers were reluctant to patrol parts of living areas, effectively making them no-go areas at certain times of day. The brewing and consumption of alcohol by prisoners had reached the level where it was accepted by staff.

Officers told the inspectorate team that they often refused to confiscate alcohol. "Home-made 'hooh' was sometimes consumed in front of the staff, yet prison rules expressly forbid prisoners to have any intoxicating liquor," the report says.

Vandalism was widespread, inmates interfered with electrical installations — putting themselves and staff at risk — and the general standard of tidiness, cleanliness and hygiene was poor.

Kenneth Clarke, the home secretary, said that Judge Tumim's recommendations on security were being tackled and that the full regime of activities for prisoners had been restored. All areas were now regularly patrolled by staff and initiatives had been launched concerning drugs, alcohol and intimidation.

HM Prison Long Lartin (Home Office, £1.50)

Shoppers defy the bombers

BY LOUISE HYDALGO

SHOPPERS returned to London's West End in their thousands yesterday undaunted by the two bomb blasts that had rocked the centre the previous day.

A small queue of early-morning shoppers formed outside the John Lewis department store before it opened. Explosions in the store on Wednesday had left four people injured and Oxford Street shops deserted for the best part of the day.

"Lightning does not strike twice," was the pragmatic approach of most who had braved the previous day's news. "It's probably the safest place in London to shop today," Danny Evans, a computer consultant from Clapham, south London, said.

Despite the busy shop floors, the events of the previous day had left their mark. A police car speeding along Oxford Street, its lights flashing, caused passers-by to halt nervously.

Oxford Street stores are estimated to have lost more than £5 million in trade from Wednesday's events.

A survey by Research Services has found that 76 per cent of Britons either do not worry about terrorism or do not let the threat of it affect their behaviour.

This ring, page 6

Judge 'too lenient' on drink-driver

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A JUDGE at the Central Criminal Court was accused yesterday of "giving a green light" to drink-driving over Christmas. After telling Keith Edwards, 31, of Streatham, southeast London, that he had driven "like a lunatic", the Recorder, Robert Harman QC, sentenced him to three months' suspended imprisonment, a two-year driving ban and a fine of £500.

Derek Probert, chairman of the Campaign Against Drink Driving, described the sentence as a disgrace.

Edwards had a previous

conviction for drink-driving, was more than twice over the legal limit and was not insured. Judge Harman told him: "This is one of the worst cases of dangerous driving I have had. It is miraculous that you did not leave carnage behind you."

The court was told that after an all-day drinking session, Edwards had become involved in a high-speed chase with the police, during which he raced through seven sets of red traffic lights, crashed into three police cars and a taxi, and drove the wrong way

round a busy roundabout. Judge Harman conceded that there were those who would say he had been too lenient. But he said that the defendant had committed the offences in "a moment of aberration".

A chartered accountant who knocked down and killed a scientist as he cycled home from work faces a jail sentence. William Bates, 52, of Brackley, Northamptonshire, was convicted at Luton Crown Court of causing death by reckless driving, after the jury heard he had been drinking.

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WITH THE TIMES TOMORROW The Saturday Review Six authors in search of a miracle Jonathan Meades chooses restaurants of the year AND Catherine Milner assesses the art of Christmas Weekend Times Disappearing night sky by Nigel Hawkes Frances Bissell's Christmas feast food AND Guide to carol services



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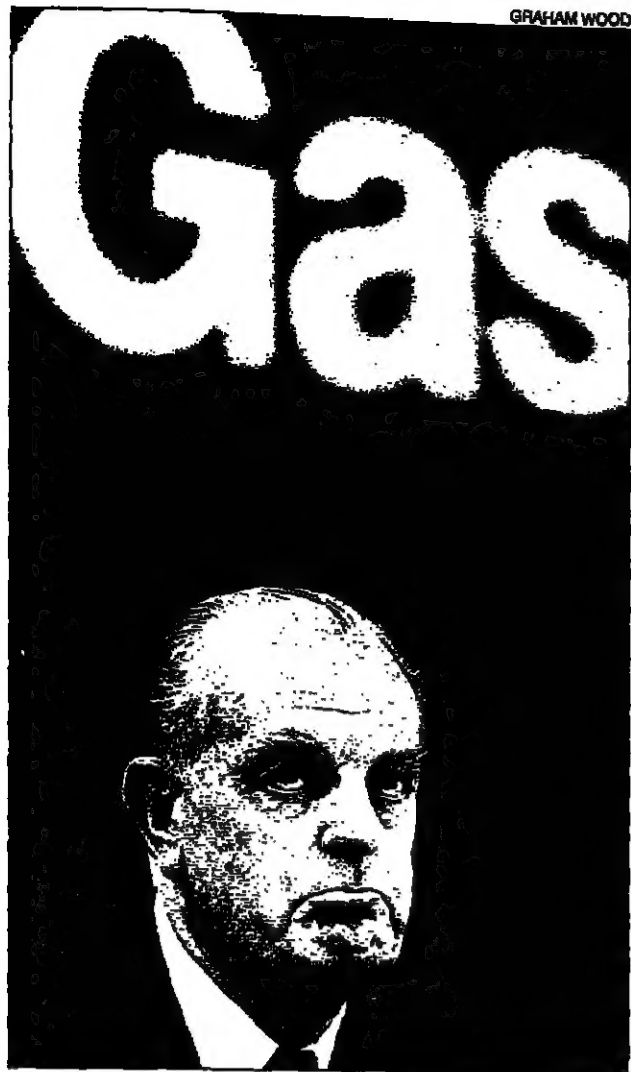


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City approval for more competition reflects analysts' views that long-term profits may rise



Gas mark one: Sir Denis Rooke, former chairman

What Sid was not told about the British Gas monopoly

BRITISH Gas shares perked up 5p to 275p when City dealers began trading yesterday. To Sid, the character used to advertise their launch, and other new investors who bought shares hand over fist when British Gas was privatised in 1986, the City's reaction to the possible end of monopoly status seemed perverse.

Sir James McKinnon, official regulator for the industry, is trying to force British Gas to separate its network of pipelines and distribution facilities from the rest of the business. He hopes this will encourage rivals to challenge the giant British Gas in its own backyard.

Sid's reaction to the break-up threat is likely to be concern, if not outright panic. He was promised at sell-off time that the structure of the industry was not about to change. Now a row has begun over the future shape of the industry and Sir James is actively encouraging others to compete for what was not so many months ago a safe, risk-free monopoly business.

The City's reaction, though, is nothing like so perverse as it

■ Yesterday's share rise indicates the City believes that ending the pipeline monopoly could benefit consumer and investor

may seem. Industry analysts and professional investors have been closely tracking a simmering row between Ofgas and the board of British Gas. The dispute over splitting the business finally burst into the open when Sir Robert Evans, British Gas chairman, became tired of Ofgas pressures for change. He called for an investigation of the issues by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission which is now in progress. Sir James's call yesterday for a break-up is part of his submission to the MMC.

The former chairman, Sir Denis Rooke, was nothing short of passionate in his insistence that British Gas should remain a fully integrated company that discovered its own gas, distributed it through its own pipeline and sold cookers through its own showrooms.

Yesterday's share price rise indicates that, so far, the City

sides with Sir James and believes a break-up of the British Gas pipeline monopoly could lead to lower prices for the consumer and in time even better profits for gas investors. The row over British Gas is not an isolated case. Relations between former state-owned companies and their post-privatisation regulators have been growing ever more strained in recent years.

There is a familiar pattern in the privatised utilities like gas, water and, to a lesser extent, electricity. While the watchdog is always mentioned in the prospectus small print at the time of flotation, he takes on the protective colouring of a poodle in the early days of his existence. Only much later does the watchdog emerge with bared teeth, his bite every bit as nasty as his bark. Sid may feel conned. But there are other possible explanations.

Since 1980 privatisation has raised in excess of £35

billion for successive governments. Consultant spin-doctors devised the now familiar array of perks, easy payments and quick fire gains to entice new shareholders into the market and make them part of Mrs Thatcher's cherished property-owning democracy. The risks of share ownership and the usual advice to first time investors to buy a spread of managed holdings in investment trusts or unit trusts was conveniently forgotten.

It is common ground among investment professionals that utilities were privatised with far too little thought about future competition in the interests of an easy share sale. Too often state-owned monopolies such as BT merely became private sector monopolies. Flawed structures imposed in several privatisations meant that a tough regulator would eventually have to work overtime in order to put matters to rights and conflict between regulators and companies can be expected to grow as both profits and prices are squeezed.

Prices may fall, page 19
Six-year war, page 21



Gas mark two: Robert Evans, now in the hot seat

Slim chance for small shareholders to sue

BY FRANCES GIBB, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

HOWEVER aggrieved Sid might be over the break-up of British Gas, he will face a hard task if he wants to sue the company. City lawyers agreed yesterday.

Gareth Jones, a partner with the energy group at Nabarro Nathanson, the law firm advising British Gas on its privatisation, said he did not see how shareholders would have a right of action if British Gas acted in compliance with the directions of the Board of Trade.

"I have not seen the British Gas prospectus. But if the Monopolies and Mergers Commission recommends the de-merger of British Gas's supply from its transportation business, and those recommendations are put into effect by the president of the board of trade, then clearly British Gas has to comply."

It would be expected to do so in a manner reflecting the interests of shareholders, he added. "It is then hard to see how there would be any right to compensation by a shareholder who was against the merger."

The prospectus was a legal document that represented the position of the company at the time of publication and in general could not be held to apply at some future date, he said. "Its effect diminishes as time goes on."

Lawyers conceded that in the case of British Gas, however, the fact that the prospectus contained an undertaking about the future integrity of the company might give rise to claims, although such a prospectus statement would have to be set against its small print and any disclaimers about future action by the regulator.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Five charged with attempted murder

Five people were remanded in custody charged with the kidnap and attempted murder of Suzanne Capper, the 16-year-old girl critically ill in hospital with burns injuries after being found naked on a suburban road in Stockport on Monday morning. Those charged were Glynis Powell, 28, Jeffrey Leigh, 26, Bernadette McNeilly, 23, and Jeanne Powell, 25, all from Moston, Manchester. No applications for bail were made. Two boys aged 16 and 17 appeared on the same charges but cannot be named. They were also remanded in custody. Miss Capper, who is also from Moston, is on a life-support machine in Manchester's Withington Hospital.

Maguire trial libel

Paul Purnell QC, a lawyer in the discredited trial of the Maguire family, won undisclosed libel damages at the High Court against Andreas Whitam Smith, the editor of *The Independent*, for an article suggesting he deliberately kept back evidence to win his case. He was one of several prosecution counsel in the trial of the Maguire Seven, whose convictions for terrorist offences were quashed by the Court of Appeal last year. Mr Whitam Smith wrote an article last June entitled "Why lawyers suppress the truth".

Prisoners on the run

Four prisoners were on the run yesterday after breaking out of a coach taking them to a young offenders' institution. About 20 youths being taken to the institution in Shropshire turned on prison officers while the coach was parked beside the A53 near Newcastle under Lyme, Staffordshire. Five guards were treated for minor injuries.

Street-Porter award

Janet Street-Porter, head of BBC youth and entertainment features, is to receive "substantial" undisclosed libel damages over suggestions in London's *Evening Standard* that she was being demoted. The publishers Associated Newspapers and a journalist, Caroline Phillips, apologised and agreed to pay legal costs as well as the damages.

Train crash blame

A train crash in which four people died near Glasgow in July last year was probably caused by one of the trains passing a signal showing red, a Health and Safety Executive enquiry report said. □ BR has launched a £2.25 million video campaign to warn children of the danger of trespassing on railway lines.

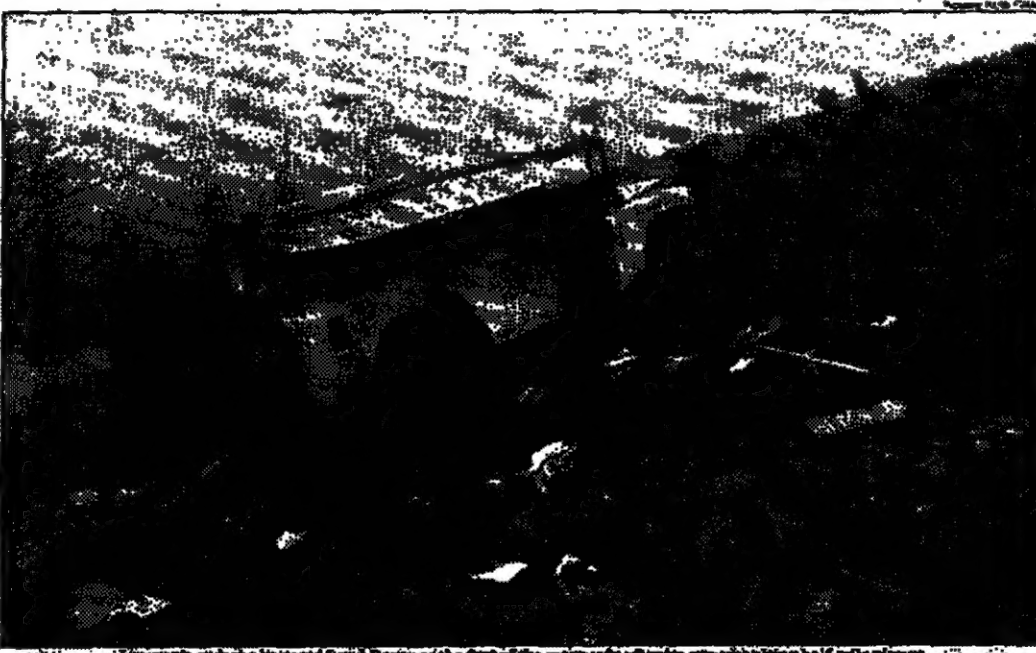
Driftnets phased out

Measures to phase out driftnet fishing for salmon and sea trout off northeast England will begin next month. The government has told the National Rivers Authority to reduce the number of driftnet licences by not issuing new ones as holders retire. The Salmon and Trout Association said the action was hopelessly inadequate.

THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

NEWS

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1992 9



Driver walks away from mountain fall

By Paul Dineen

A POLICE driver yesterday walked away from a mountain fall in his Land Rover — and then walked away with only a stiff neck and one scratch in his hand.

Mr Windsor, 48, a water engineer, had been driving on a narrow road on the mountainside at Newmarket, New Hampshire, when he pulled over by a forest track to allow another car to overtake.

As he did his rear wheels began to sink and slide down the steep slope.

He said yesterday: "The first 100 yards were quite gentle — then the Land Rover hit a boulder with such force it just flipped head over heels."

"Then the landing really started. I was strapped in, but thinking I would never get out alive. Each time I turned to get out."

"I was conscious the whole time, but I can't remember how many times the vehicle rolled over. It seemed to last for an age, but I suppose I



Windsor, driver, looking

was trapped inside for only about three or four minutes. "When I got out and looked up the mountain I could believe how far I'd fallen. It was half a mile."

"I was feeling words by shouting for which he had made the rescue."

Windsor added: "I still can't believe I got out alive. It was like being trapped in a car that was falling. I had no idea how many times I flipped over. I thought my life was over."

Yesterday he was recovering from Sunday's accident at home in Newmarket, New Hampshire.

His supervisor Mr Sid Smith was in the area and found him in the wreckage of the Land Rover and ended up in hospital with a broken leg.

He said: "It was a relief to see him in the car."

He was taken to the hospital and is now recovering.

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Tills will ring this Sunday despite EC

By LIN JENKINS

MORE money is likely to pass through the nation's tills this Sunday than on any sabbath in Britain's history, despite this week's ruling by the European Court of Justice that Sunday trading rules do not conflict with the Treaty of Rome.

The ruling that the Shops Act banning most Sunday trade does not contravene European Community rules will not stop many stores flouting the law which has gone unenforced, and increasingly little observed, since 1950.

Local councils still have time to seek injunctions preventing stores opening for the last Sunday before Christmas, but few are expected to do so.

Only a handful of local councils are expected to take legal action against shops opening on Sunday, despite an assurance from Sir Nicholas Lyell, the attorney-general, in a Commons reply that councils could continue to prosecute. Most will wait for a House of Lords ruling on the law in the New Year, or the change in the law promised shortly by the home secretary.

All cases brought to magistrates courts throughout the country since test cases were referred to Luxembourg had been adjourned until the outcome of the hearing.

Norwich City Council, which has 197 prosecutions outstanding against 47 companies, among them Habitat, Sainsbury, Woolworth, BHS, Comet, Dixons and Our Price, has said it intends to be the first to return to the courts to enforce the act. The council says those who trade this Sunday will be prosecuted.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council, which with Norwich brought the cases referred to the European court, said it retained its stance on enforcing the law, but would wait until the Lords' ruling before taking further action.

Paul Hodgson, the city secretary, said the ruling, after a decade of pursuing those who broke the law, was a "complete vindication" of the council's policy. "We have a very clear ruling from Europe. Our view is that the Lords will now rule wholly and conclusively in our favour."

B&Q, one of six retailers

involved in three separate cases referred to Luxembourg, is under an injunction not to open at Stoke, but said it would continue to open 280 other stores on Sundays, at least until the Lords ruled.

Bill Melly, chairman of the Oxford Street Traders Association, said shops which wanted to open would continue to do so and he doubted whether local authorities would take action since the law was to be replaced.

The Luxembourg ruling clears the way for the government to reform the Shops Act, which Kenneth Clarke said three weeks ago was "in abeyance". The home secretary has told MPs they will have a free vote on three options. The first would remove all restrictions bringing England and Wales in line with Scotland, the second would allow small shops to open but place certain curbs on larger ones, and the third would ban most trading while allowing local authorities discretion on who could open.

Shoppers defy IRA, page 3
Law Reports, page 31



Community spirit: Anna MacDonald, 11, of Bolsover School in Derbyshire joins 1,500 children from schools close to the 31 threatened coal pits in a carol service at Westminster Abbey yesterday organised by the Bishop of Wakefield

Extra vitamins in pregnancy cut risk of handicap

By JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

ALL pregnant women and those hoping to conceive should take a vitamin supplement containing folic acid to reduce the risk of their baby being born handicapped, the government's chief medical officer, Dr Kenneth Calman, said yesterday.

The vitamin supplement, which should be taken until the twelfth week of pregnancy, would help to reduce the number of babies born with spina bifida (a defect in the spinal cord) or similar conditions, Dr Calman said. About 200 babies are born with the defect each year.

All women of child-bearing age have been advised to increase their intake of folic acid by eating foods rich in the vitamin, such as Brussels sprouts, spinach, green beans and oranges, in case they become pregnant.

The advice, from a government expert group, follows a trial last year which showed that giving folic acid supplements to pregnant women who had already had a child with spina bifida reduced their risk of another with the same defect by 70 per cent. In guidance issued last year, the health department said that these women should be offered folic acid supplements on prescription, in amounts of four milligrams daily, or 5mg where this was not available. The new guidance seeks to extend protection to all

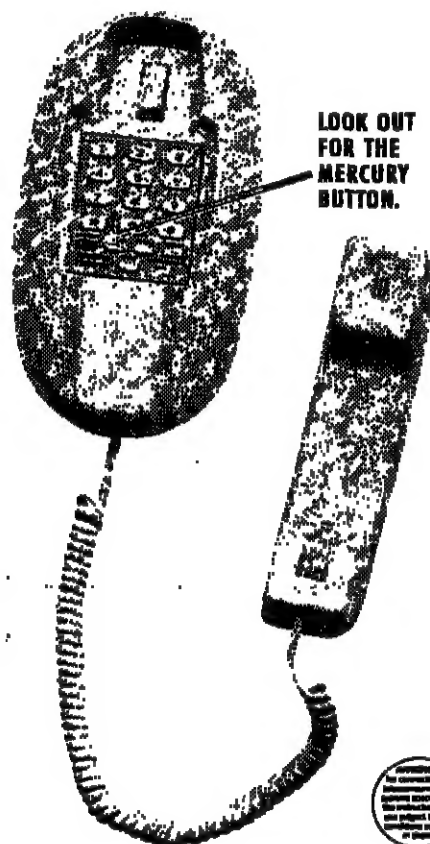
women planning a pregnancy, but recommends a lower dose of 0.4 milligrams a day. Professor Dame June Lloyd, who chaired the expert group, said that folic acid was a safe, natural vitamin but, in high doses, could cause problems in rare cases. The higher dose was needed in women who had already had an affected baby because they were at ten times greater risk.

Dr Calman said that folic acid supplements of 0.4 milligrams could be hard to find in shops, but women could choose a multivitamin preparation with about the same level of folic acid instead. Professor Lloyd said that the aim was to raise the folic acid content of the average diet from 0.2mg to 0.6mg.

Londoners are healthier and longer-lived than people in many other cities because their mothers grew up in rural areas, Professor David Barker and colleagues from the University of Southampton argue in this week's issue of the *British Medical Journal* (Nigel Hawkes writes).

Dr Barker's earlier studies have shown that longevity is strongly linked to good nutrition among mothers and infants. Many of today's elderly Londoners were born to mothers who were heavily and well-fed, either because they came from country areas or because they worked as domestic servants.

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Arts grants favour resident orchestras

By ALISON ROBERTS
ARTS REPORTER

THE Arts Council's annual allocation of grants to artistic organisations, announced yesterday, will widen the divisions between London's four main orchestras and squeeze many arts companies that are now faced with cuts in budgets.

The London Philharmonic is awarded a 6.3 per cent increase in its annual grant, marking the start of its residency at the South Bank Centre and bringing its budget into line with that of the London Symphony Orchestra, resident at the Barbican. Both organisations are now awarded almost £1.3 million for 1993-4, a significantly higher amount than that given to the other two major London-based orchestras.

The Royal Philharmonic Orchestra has not received an increase in grant for the second year running, while the Philharmonia receives an increase of only 1.6 per cent. Anthony Everett, secretary-general of the Arts Council, said that while the RPO and the Philharmonia had a future role, the council's "long-term strategy is to focus on the development of the residencies".

The Royal Opera House receives a slender increase of 2.5 per cent, reflecting the Arts Council's own 2 per cent budget increase, and will do nothing to pull the ROH out of present financial difficulty. Covent Garden is now operating with a budget deficit of £5 million.

Letters, page 15

Mackay rejects Bar's freeze

By FRANCES GIBBS
LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

THE Lord Chancellor delivered a clear if polite snub yesterday to the unprecedented offer by the Law Society and the Bar to accept a freeze in legal aid pay rates if he will look at substitute proposals on curbing legal aid.

Lord Mackay said he had considered the Law Society's claim for a 7.3 per cent rise in rates from April, but "had already arrived at the view that no increase would be appropriate".

He also took the Law Society to task over its claim that his proposals to cut legal aid costs, which the society says will take 10m people out of legal aid, would "tear the heart out of the legal aid system".

This year, the net cost of legal aid would be some £1.1 billion, Lord Mackay said. In the next three years the overall cost was forecast to rise by 10 per cent on average, and the number of people helped would rise by more than 20 per cent. Half the households in England and Wales would still qualify for legal aid. "I must say that I find it difficult to accept that these are indications of a dying scheme," Lord Mackay said.

On Tuesday, Mark Sheldon, the president of the Law Society, and Lord Williams of Mostyn QC, the chairman of the Bar, called on Lord Mackay to consider substitute proposals to save £43 million — the amount the Government's proposals will save. Mr Sheldon told Lord Mackay that eligibility cuts were the "worst possible way of making savings on legal aid".

The way it isn't



I AM delighted to be able to bring you another instalment from the Christmas round-robin sent to me by my old American friends Al and Sally du Lally. They tell of Granny du Lally's marvellous progress during the past year.

"It has been another super year for Granny du Lally (or 'Napoleon' as she now insists on being known, bless her!). Now 92 years young, she scored high marks on all her examinations first time round! As a result, she has gained life membership of the Sunset (High Security) Wing in our beautiful local senior citizens' rest home. Congratulations!

"We're delighted to say that Granny has not allowed her upgrading to

affect her life style! She still insists on keeping in touch with folk from other lands, each morning boasting of having renewed her acquaintance with the Scotch and the French — and often both at the same time!

"With her usual consideration for other folk, she often worries that her fellow residents are not warm enough, taking a match to their beds if she feels they are the slightest bit chilly. Ever the poet, she continues to write a lot, particularly to the principal of the rest home, whom she playfully refers to as the Führer. As you can imagine, he thinks her quite a character!

"Granny's sense of humour remains as strong as ever. She delights in teasing the local shopkeepers by hiding their products in the inner pocket of her coat and racing off! Needless to say, they have a magnetic response to her, or at least their security alarms do! Cheers, y'all, from Al and Sally!

Next week: great news of the du Lally pets

First official league table in higher education reveals that research has improved

Universities give top researchers cash priority



Davies: selectivity has raised standards

By JOHN O'LEARY
EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

UNIVERSITIES have improved their research in the past three years by concentrating their resources on the best teams of academics, according to the first official assessment of quality throughout the new higher education sector.

The research output of 43,000 academics was ranked for the Universities Funding Council, which will use the information to determine the allocation of more than £650 million. Departments stand to lose their entire research budgets if they appear at the bottom of a five-point scale.

Many of the new universities chose not to submit some departments for assessment, automatically ruling them out of public funding for research. The University of Central England, in Birmingham,

did not enter the exercise because it intends to concentrate on teaching and contract research.

Even the traditional universities did not submit all their academics' work. As a result, the rankings identify the best centres of research in each subject, but do not measure the overall quality of work in each university. The exercise took no account of teaching strengths.

Professor Graeme Davies, the chairman of the funding council, said that a more selective approach to research within universities had raised standards. "There is some evidence that the research activity in some departments has been reduced and they have become more predominantly active in teaching, but in a very heterogeneous sector such as we have now, institutions will adopt very different strategies."

More than 450 leading researchers, industrialists and civil servants

raised work in 72 subjects. Publications, private research grants and even a statue and a compact disc were used to judge quality.

Traditional universities were assessed in 1986 and 1989, but this was the first time that colleges of higher education and the former polytechnics were invited to enter. Few of the newcomers have received significant funding for research, and the gap was reflected in the ratings. Only Westminster University's five researchers in communication and media studies achieved a top rating; most of the new universities' entries were concentrated in the lower grades.

Vice-chancellors welcomed the exercise, however, as evidence that the traditional universities had improved by an average of half a point out of five since the last assessment, while some new universities had developed excellent research on little

funding. David Harrison, the vice-chancellor's chairman, said: "To have achieved this increase in research performance against a background of massive expansion in student numbers is a remarkable tribute to our dedicated and seriously underpaid staff."

The assessment process has been widely criticised by academics, many of whom believe that quantity of work was more important than quality in achieving high ratings. Professor Davies said yesterday he expected the rankings to be criticised on a number of counts, but he had "every confidence in the integrity of the exercise."

The vice-chancellors tried to have the assessment postponed to meet objections from the new universities that their differing missions would not be taken into account. A submission to the funding council said that the system which formed

the basis of the evaluation was "not suitable for use in assessing quality".

Oxford's faculties board said it was "extremely concerned" about the haste of the exercise and Christ Church declared itself "distressed" by a number of aspects of the system. Christopher Haigh, the senior censor, told the conference of colleges last month: "Christ Church suggests that the narrow focus of the assessment exercise will yield misleading conclusions. It is right that the performance of institutions should be monitored, but it must be stressed that institutions work within financial and social contexts set by others."

The Association of University Teachers hailed the assessment exercise as a "celebration" of achievement, with ratings improving since 1989 despite a real fall in research funding. John Akker, the acting general secretary, said: "The

success of higher education research in the UK, as shown by these ratings, should be a shining beacon to the government to give real support to research, and to cease their parsimonious 'rob Peter to pay Paul' policies."

Some universities were delighted by their improvement in the ratings. Bradford and Brunel both improved their average score significantly since having their research funding reduced after 1989's figures.

David Triesman, the negotiating secretary of Nafhe, the union for lecturers in the new universities and colleges of higher education, was named yesterday as the next general secretary of the AUT. The two unions are to form a confederation if Nafhe agrees to a plan approved by the AUT's annual conference.

Leading article, page 15

Theories of a mad professor challenge the world's wisdom

By IAN MURRAY

KEITH Clayton is a "mad professor" who says that sea defences are worse than useless and that the North Sea could well be the best place for sewage.

The dean of the University of East Anglia's school of environmental studies also believes you could do a lot worse than leave nuclear submarines on the sea bed for the moving earth's crust to swallow up.

Professor Clayton's researches suggest Britain's sea defences are worse than useless. "I am the mad professor who wants to allow England to erode," he says.

"My view is that the sea must be allowed to dominate. That is beginning to be accepted now but even 20 years ago that was far too radical an idea."

Twenty years ago he began studying the pattern of erosion and deposit along the Norfolk coast for the environment department. Over the years he has carefully built up what he calls a "sediment budget" to prove his case and help explode "the 19th century myth that man can control the environment."

The sediment budget shows that it is hugely important to allow cliffs to erode. Without erosion, he has found, there would be no beaches, no dunes and no sandbanks to protect other parts of the coast from erosion and flooding. The project also showed that high beaches made of sand swept along by the waves are far more effective in preventing erosion than the traditional solutions of sea walls and groynes — now the "mad professor's" ideas have now been adopted by the National Rivers Authority.

Pioneering work such as the erosion research has helped win and keep the school its grade 5 status and

Success in research attracts the money that allows original minds to prove their ideas both true and useful

the government and private money that follows from it. Because the school is pre-eminent in its field, it not only receives £2.5 million in government grants but it wins private contracts and sponsorship worth another £4 million. Losing grade 5 recognition would probably have slashed an initial £500,000 from available funds, dragged down the value of the work and made it increasingly difficult to stay in the forefront of research. But people who turn to the school for advice do not always get the expected "green" answers.

"There is a lot of pressure against putting sewage into the North Sea, but that is the best place to put it. You can do far worse than putting it into a deep and well-flushed sea. As far as poisoning the fish is concerned, that's rubbish. The sewage has probably kept the poor fish alive," said the dean.

He even argues that the bottom of the deepest oceans is the best place to dispose of unwanted nuclear submarines. Eventually, as the earth's plates slid back and forth, the submarines would be dragged back into the centre of the earth. "They would be far safer there than tied up at some dockyard."

His worry is that politicians lack the necessary long-term perspectives to make the right decisions. "Global change works on a time scale of 50 years and against that the four-year period between elections is not very relevant."



Centre of excellence: Sarah Houlton, a PhD student at Imperial College, London, one of the country's top centres for scientific research

New arrival proves its worth

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

WORK by five academics yesterday enabled the new University of Westminster to break the traditional universities' stranglehold on the top research ratings.

Out of 172 institutions assessed in a total of 72 subjects, Westminster's Centre for Communication and Information Studies (CCIS) was the only representative of the new universities. The unit has five

members and specialises in the political economy and history of the media, and on communications and information policy.

The university, formerly the Polytechnic of Central London, has a base in Regent Street. The unit's current projects are concerned with public service broadcasting in the UK and France, media in Eastern Europe, copyright

and the social history of British broadcasting. The centre, established in 1986, has received research council grants and contracts from the British Library and the European Commission.

Meanwhile Portsmouth University claimed it headed all the former polytechnics in the assessment exercise, with 24 of its 35 assessed departments graded 2 or better.

Science funding slips

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

BRITAIN has slipped to seventh place in the international league in spending on scientific research and development, according to a report yesterday by the Office of Science and Technology.

In gross spending as a proportion of GNP, Britain has fallen from third in the table in 1981 to seventh in 1990 after Japan, Switzerland, Sweden, Germany, the

US and France. Britain is also seventh in business spending on research and development, from being fourth. In spending in government establishments, it has dropped from second place to eleventh.

However, the OST said that gross spending on research and development in Britain remained about the average for G7 industrialised nations.

TOP RESEARCH

The scores represent an average of the universities' ratings on a five-point scale. Units rated as 5, which may be less than a whole department, have at least some research of international standing.

Those rated 1 will not have access to the main research funds. Institutions assessed in fewer than nine subjects do not appear in the table.

Name of School	Total pts
Cambridge	4.88
Oxford	4.80
London Sch of Tropical Med	4.50
London School of Economics	4.35
University College London	4.34
Imperial College	4.28
BMF: Institute of Cancer Research	4.20
University of Warwick	4.07
School of Biocatalysis & East European Studies	4.00
United Medical & Dental Schools	4.00
School of Oriental & African Studies	3.80
UMIST	3.80
University of Essex	3.78
University of Edinburgh	3.75
University of Lancaster	3.74
University of Bath	3.73
Birkbeck College	3.73
University of Manchester	3.71
University of Sussex	3.70
University of Birmingham	3.67
University of York	3.66
BMF: National Heart & Lung Institute	3.66
University of Nottingham	3.65
University of Durham	3.65
King's College London	3.65
University of St Andrews	3.64
University of Sheffield	3.58
University of Bristol	3.57
University of Southampton	3.55
Queen Mary & Westfield College	3.51
University of Surrey	3.50
Royal Holloway and Bedford New College	3.47
University of East Anglia	3.46
University of Leeds	3.44
University of Exeter	3.44
University of Liverpool	3.43
University of Newcastle upon Tyne	3.36
University of Reading	3.36
Loughborough University of Technology	3.34
University of Leicester	3.29
London Hosp Medical Coll	3.25
St George's Hosp Med Sch	3.25
Open University	3.22
University of Strathclyde	3.22
University of Stirling	3.21
University of Glasgow	3.19
Cranfield Inst of Tech	3.18
University College of Swansea	3.12
Aston University	3.11
University of Wales, Cardiff	3.10
City University	3.08
Heriot-Watt University	3.05
Brunei University	3.05
University of Hull	3.00
BMF: Institute of Child Health	3.00
University of Kent	3.00
University of Dundee	3.00
Univ of Wales, Coll of Med	3.00
University of Aberdeen	3.00
St Bart's Hosp Med Coll	3.00
Univ College of Wales	2.96
University of Ulster	2.95
Univ Coll of North Wales, Bangor	2.95
University of Bradford	2.95
University of Keele	2.93
Goldsmiths' College	2.91
Queen's University of Belfast	2.87
University of Westminster	2.86
Charing Cross & Westminster Medical School	2.71
St David's University College	2.63
Royal Free Hosp Medical School	2.60
Roehampton Institute	2.50
Kingston University	2.50
University of Plymouth	2.38
Sheffield Hallam University	2.17
South Bank University	2.11
Univ of West of England, Bristol	2.11
Coverity University	2.11
University of North London	2.09
University of Westminster	2.04
Univ of Northumbria, Newcastle	2.00
University of Teesside	2.00
Cheltenham and Gloucester College of Higher Education	2.00
Middlesex University	2.00
University of Brighton	2.00
Oxford Brookes University	1.95
Manchester Met Univ	1.95
University of Greenwich	1.90
University of Huddersfield	1.85
Nene College	1.85
University of Sunderland	1.84
Leeds Metropolitan University	1.83
University of Portsmouth	1.80
University of Hertfordshire	1.78
Bath College of Higher Education	1.77
University of Wolverhampton	1.76
City of London Polytechnic	1.76
Robert Gordon University	1.75
Thames Valley University	1.75
De Montfort University	1.71
Bournemouth University	1.70
Glasgow Polytechnic	1.68
Anglia Polytechnic University	1.68
Nottingham Trent University	1.65
University of East London	1.65
Liverpool John Moores Univ	1.60
Staffordshire University	1.58
West London Inst Higher Ed	1.58
Canterbury Christ Church Coll	1.57
Derbyshire CHE	1.56
Crawley and Alton College	1.56
Univ of Central Lancs	1.55
Nagpur University	1.54
Dundee Inst of Technology	1.54
Worcester CHE	1.52
University of Humber	1.52
La Santa Union Coll	1.52
University of Glamorgan	1.52
University of Paisley	1.52
Bolton Inst of Higher Ed	1.50
Salford College of Technology	1.50
Southampton Inst of Higher Ed	1.50
Chester College	1.47
Buckinghamshire CHE	1.40

Clinical laboratory sciences: Cambridge (pathology); Royal Postgraduate Medical School, London; University College London.
Community-based clinical subjects: Cambridge; Institute of Psychiatry, London; London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine; Manchester.
Hospital-based clinical subjects: Cambridge; National Heart and Lung Institute, London; Institute of Ophthalmology, London; Royal Postgraduate Medical School, London; University College London; Oxford; Edinburgh.
Clinical dentistry: London Hospital Medical College; United Medical and Dental Schools.
Pre-clinical studies: Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine, London; St George's Hospital Medical School, London. (No departments scored maximum points)
Anatomy: Birmingham; Cambridge; University College London; Oxford.
Physiology: Bristol; Liverpool; Oxford.
Pharmacology: Liverpool; University College London; Oxford.
Pharmacy: Bath; School of Pharmacy, London; Nottingham.
Nursing: King's College, London; Manchester; Surrey. (No departments scored maximum points)
Studies allied to medicine: University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology; Southampton; Surrey (toxicology); Aberdeen.
Biochemistry: Cambridge; Oxford; Dundee; Glasgow.
Psychology: Birmingham; Cam-

bridge; University College London; Nottingham; Oxford; Sheffield; York; St Andrews; Wales (Cardiff).
Biological sciences: Cambridge (zoology); Birkbeck College, London; London; University College London; Oxford; Zoology; Sussex; Warwick; York; Edinburgh; Glasgow.
General engineering: Cambridge; Durham; Keele; Imperial College, London; Oxford; Warwick; Strathclyde.
Chemical engineering: Cambridge; Imperial College, London; University College London; UMIST.
Civil engineering: Bradford; Bristol; Imperial College, London; University College London (photogrammetry); Newcastle; Heriot-Watt; Wales (Cardiff); Wales (Swansea).
Electrical and electronic engineering: Imperial College, London; University College London; UMIST (instrumentation and analytical science); Southampton; Surrey; Queen's; Belfast; Edinburgh.
Mechanical, aeronautical and manufacturing engineering: Bradford; Hull; Leeds; Liverpool; Imperial College, London; UMIST (Shedfield; Southampton (sound and vibration)).
Mineral and mining engineering: Imperial College, London.
Metalurgy and materials: Birmingham; Cambridge; Imperial College, London; UMIST (corrosion science); Oxford.
Build environment: Leeds; University College London; Reading; Salford; Strathclyde; Wales (Cardiff).

Queen Mary and Westfield College, London; Oxford; Warwick; Glasgow.
Computer science: Cambridge; Imperial College, London; Manchester; Newcastle; Oxford; Sussex; Warwick; York; Edinburgh; Glasgow.
General engineering: Cambridge; Durham; Keele; Imperial College, London; Oxford; Warwick; Strathclyde.
Chemical engineering: Cambridge; Imperial College, London; University College London; UMIST.
Civil engineering: Bradford; Bristol; Imperial College, London; University College London (photogrammetry); Newcastle; Heriot-Watt; Wales (Cardiff); Wales (Swansea).
Electrical and electronic engineering: Imperial College, London; University College London; UMIST (instrumentation and analytical science); Southampton; Surrey; Queen's; Belfast; Edinburgh.
Mechanical, aeronautical and manufacturing engineering: Bradford; Hull; Leeds; Liverpool; Imperial College, London; UMIST (Shedfield; Southampton (sound and vibration)).
Mineral and mining engineering: Imperial College, London.
Metalurgy and materials: Birmingham; Cambridge; Imperial College, London; UMIST (corrosion science); Oxford.
Build environment: Leeds; University College London; Reading; Salford; Strathclyde; Wales (Cardiff).

Town and country planning: Sheffield; Glasgow; Wales (Cardiff).
Geography: Bristol; Cambridge; Durham; University College London; Oxford; Edinburgh.
Law: Cambridge; King's College London; London School of Economics; University College London; Oxford; Edinburgh.
Anthropology: Cambridge; London School of Economics; School of African and Oriental Studies, London; University College London; Manchester; Oxford.
Economic and social history: Leicester; London School of Economics; Edinburgh.
Economics and econometrics: Bristol; Cambridge; Essex; Birkbeck College, London; London School of Economics; University College London; Oxford; Southampton; Warwick; York.
Politics and international studies: Essex; Hull; King's College London; London School of Economics; University College London; Oxford; Southampton; Warwick; York.
Social policy and administration: Bath; Cambridge; Kent; London School of Economics; York.
Social work: East Anglia; Stirling.
Sociology: Cambridge; Essex; Lancaster; Loughborough; Warwick; Edinburgh.
Business and management: Bradford; Lancaster; London Business School; London School of Economics (information systems); UMIST; Warwick; Strathclyde.
Accountancy: London School of Economics; Manchester.
American studies: Keele; Nottingham.

Middle Eastern and African studies: Birmingham; Cambridge.
East and South Asian studies: Cambridge; Oxford.
English language and literature: Cambridge; Leeds; University College London; Oxford; Sussex; Edinburgh; Wales (Cardiff).
European studies: Birmingham; Bradford.
Celtic studies: Cambridge; Oxford.
French: Cambridge; Exeter; Birkbeck College, London.
German and related languages: Birmingham; Cambridge; King's College London; University College London (Dutch); Institute of Germanic Studies, London; Manchester; Nottingham; Oxford.
Italian: Cambridge; Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, London; University College London; Oxford; Reading.
Russian: Queen Mary and Westfield College, London; School of Slavonic and East European Studies, London.
Spanish: Birmingham; Cambridge; King's College London (Portuguese); Queen Mary and Westfield College, London.
Linguistics: Cambridge; Essex; Lancaster; School of Oriental and African Studies, London; University College London.
Classics and ancient history: Bristol; Cambridge; King's College London; University College London; Institute of Classical Studies, London; Oxford; St Andrews.
Archaeology: Cambridge; University College London; Oxford; Reading; Sheffield; Southampton.
History: Birmingham; Cambridge;

Birkbeck College, London; King's College London; London School of Economics.
History of art, architecture and design: Cambridge; East Anglia; School of Oriental and African Studies, London; University College London; Courtauld Institute of Art, London; Sussex; Warwick.
Library and information management: City; Sheffield.
Philosophy: Cambridge; Birkbeck College, London; King's College London; London School of Economics; Oxford.
Theology, divinity and religious studies: Birmingham; Cambridge; Durham; Lancaster; Leeds; King's College London; Oxford; Sheffield.
Art and design: Brunel; Goldsmiths' College, London; Open University; Reading (typography and graphic communication).
Communication and media studies: Goldsmiths' College, London; Warwick; Westminster; Stirling.
Drama, dance and performing arts: Exeter; Hull; Royal Holloway and Bedford New College, London; Manchester; Glasgow.
Music: Cambridge; King's College London; Nottingham.
Education: Bath; Birmingham; Exeter; Lancaster; Leeds; London Institute of Education; King's College London; Manchester; Newcastle; Open University (educational technology); Sheffield; Edinburgh.
Physical education and sport science: Loughborough.

Smith launches study of welfare society

By JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

■ The social justice commission is expected to be the cornerstone for Labour policy at the next general election

JOHN Smith, the Labour leader, yesterday declared his personal support for universal benefits as he launched a radical review of the welfare state.

Announcing the most sweeping study into Britain's social condition since the Beveridge report 50 years ago, Mr Smith said a radical and comprehensive approach was needed to address "deepening poverty, growing homelessness and ever-increasing unemployment".

The commission on social justice, chaired by Sir Gordon Borrie, will look at the case for universal or means-tested benefits and examine options such as integrating tax and benefits or a hypothecated welfare tax. Its report is expected to provide the cornerstone for Labour policy at the next general election.

Mr Smith appeared to pre-empt the commission's work by making clear his personal preference for retaining universal benefits. "I believe there is a very strong case for having child benefit and retirement pensions as universal benefits," he said.

When challenged that his remarks would be the commission's hands, he said he was usually criticised for not taking a lead. "As soon as I take a lead I am accused of inflicting my views on someone," Mr Smith insisted that he was not closing off any options. "The commission will

be free to look at all issues. I gave my personal view and I don't think they will be inhibited in the slightest."

Labour officials argued later that Mr Smith was wary of signalling any policy shift. They insisted that he would listen to what the commission had to say, but pointed out that if he had said anything else he would be accused of favouring means testing.

Mr Smith indicated later that he would expect Sir Gordon to look at mortgage tax relief. It should be "looked at with some care in the context of not just the housing and social policy but taxation policy, because there is a big taxation element there".

The Labour leader emphasised that the commission would be independent of the party and he would be under no obligation to adopt any of its recommendations when it reports in the summer of 1994. The commission had not been set up to make party policy. "We have our own democratic process in place for that purpose," he hoped the commission would take account of Labour's support for full employment and its policy for a minimum wage. "People don't want hand-outs — they

want a chance to achieve," Mr Smith said. "We should no longer be thinking in terms of a safety net, but of creating a springboard to independence, self-reliance and personal fulfilment."

Sir Gordon said Britain was now radically different from the 1940s, when Beveridge reported. "We will not repudiate the Beveridge model: we will rethink it. We want to chart a course of social and economic reform that will make Britain fairer."

Sir Gordon said the commission's work would be dominated by two themes: interdependency and individual opportunity. "I want to see a tax system that rewards work, training opportunities that encourage personal development, childcare that opens up new opportunities for women, and flexible working patterns which can provide new pathways out of poverty."

The commission planned to report in 18 months, he said, but seminars and conferences would be held during that period to discuss the key issues. In addition, Sir Gordon planned to publish "provocative and challenging" discussion papers or green papers before its final report.

Rethinking the social benefits of Beveridge

The commission on social justice, formally launched yesterday by John Smith, is not just an attempt by Labour to break the political logjam on taxation and social security. The creation of the commission underlines how British politics still has not fully come to terms with the end of the Thatcher era.

Professor Ivor Crewe remarked during the heyday of Thatcherism that, while Keynes may be dead, Beveridge lives on. Now, however, the Keynesian body is still showing some life, while the legacy of Beveridge is

creaking noisily.

The welfare state may have been shaken up during the 1980s, but the basic tenets of the 50-year-old Beveridge report remained largely intact in terms of the provision of universal benefits and a taxpayer-financed health service. Government reviews of social security altered the structure of discretionary benefits but not the core ones, such as retirement pensions. Nigel Lawson managed to freeze child benefit in money terms, but the Major government restarted uprating the benefit each year.

The Tories are now as constrained as Labour. Their last election manifesto promised to raise child benefit and the basic pension in line with prices. Despite pressures to hold down public spending, the cabinet decided that other benefits also had to be raised in line with inflation. Labour has remained committed to universal benefits, as Mr Smith yesterday said was still his view.



The state of welfare: 50 years on, Sir Gordon Borrie works in the shadow of the Beveridge report

Even excluding the costs of higher unemployment, social security spending now accounts for more than a quarter of the total. Together with commitments to raise standards of health provision and education, that puts pressure on taxes. Both parties believe

it is politically impossible to raise income tax.

Underlying these constraints is what Professor J. K. Galbraith has called the "culture of contentment", the reluctance of the well-off majority to pay higher taxes to help the poor minority. Whereas, a century ago, a much-debated topic in British politics was the "tyranny of the majority", whereby the least well-off would punish the majority through confiscatory taxes and socialism. Now the "tyranny of the majority" may mean the opposite.

Moreover, a large proportion of child benefit goes to

the already well-off, while only a minority of the elderly now rely on the basic state pension and a majority have income from savings and occupational pensions.

Just as the Tories have been questioning the traditional structure of public services, so it is now time to question the welfare state. In contrast with the days of Beveridge, there are a growing number of women in the workforce, long-term unemployment is higher, and a growing divide exists between better-off and poor pensioners. Similar changes have led to a reappraisal of American social policy by Bill Clinton. He emphasises

workfare rather than automatic universal benefits.

Sir Gordon Borrie, the new commission's chairman, was open-minded yesterday about the scope of the enquiry. It will look beyond social security and tax to employment, education, training, housing and childcare. Sir Gordon and his team will have to demonstrate their radical credentials. If they do, and challenge conventional thinking about the welfare state, then they may also free the Major government from the constraints it faces on tax and social security policy.

PETER RIDDELL

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Tories excluded from social justice panel

THE 16 members of the commission on social justice come from the centre and centre-left of the social policy field. Two Liberal Democrats have joined the team, but no Tories. There was little point in making it more difficult to reach agreement, Sir Gordon Borrie, the chairman, said.

The commission, which starts work next month and expects to report in the summer of 1994, includes: Sir Gordon Borrie, director general of the Office of Fair Trading 1976-1992. He has twice contested parliamentary seats for Labour, but is seen as an independent chairman.

Tommy Atkinson, professor of political economy at Cambridge University and a member of the pensions law review committee.

Patricia Hewitt, deputy director, Institute for Public Policy Research, and former press secretary to Neil Kinnock.

Ruth Lester, director of the Child Poverty Action Group between 1979 and 1987, now professor of applied social studies at Bradford University.

Steven Webb, a Liberal Democrat, and economist at the Institute for Fiscal Studies. A former specialist adviser to the Commons social security committee.

Bernard Williams, White's professor of moral philosophy, Oxford University.

Margaret Wheeler, National officer for the Confederation of Health Service Employees.

Emma MacLennan, vice-chair of the Low Pay Unit.

David Marquand, professor of politics at Sheffield University and a member of the Liberal Democrat policy committee.

Other members are the Very Rev John Gladwin; Christopher Haskins (chairman of Northern Foods plc); Dr Penelope Leach (author of the Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation); Anita Bhalla (editor Asian programmes BBC Radio WM); John Gennard (professor of industrial relations, University of Strathclyde); Dr Eithne McLaughlin (lecturer in social policy, Queen's University, Belfast).

THE TIMES

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Israel wins court fight to deport Palestinian hardliners

■ Yitzhak Rabin, having won judicial backing to eject Muslim activists, is facing a barrage of international criticism

FROM BEN LYNNFIELD IN JERUSALEM AND MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

ISRAEL'S supreme court last night cleared the way for the deportation of 383 Palestinians in an unprecedented move that military authorities said was aimed at crippling Islamic fundamentalist activity in the occupied territories.

After more than ten hours of deliberations, the court cancelled an injunction it had issued to block the expulsions. However, it called on the state to explain its behaviour in attempting to remove the Palestinians hastily. The court decided by a five to two majority to allow the deportation to proceed but issued an order giving the government 30 days to explain its decision.

The court verdict came as 418 Palestinians held for expulsion were taken by bus by the army to the Lebanese border at Metulla, bound and blindfolded. Authorities said they were being "temporarily removed" for two years. Thirty-five members of the group were taken off the buses last night and sent back to Ketziot prison in southern Israel.

In Beirut, the Lebanese defence ministry announced that the army would turn back the Palestinians. Abu Muhammad Mustafa, an exiled leader of Hamas, the Islamic resistance movement that kidnapped and killed an Israeli policeman, provoking the deportations, said: "The Lebanese should just shut the crossing point in the face of the deportees and tell them to go back even if the Israelis shoot them. Let the Israelis then bear the responsibility. Why don't the Israelis deport [Palestinians] to Jordan or Egypt? Because they refuse to accept the deportees." Mr Mustafa condemned the Israeli expulsion orders as barbaric and called for UN intervention to stop Israel putting them into effect.

Lawyers from the Association for Civil Rights in Israel



Waiting for justice: Israeli troops at the Lebanon border yesterday guarding buses carrying Palestinians of the Hamas Muslim fundamentalist group as they awaited the court decision on their fate

had accused Yitzhak Rabin's government of trying to carry out the expulsions under cover of darkness and secrecy on Wednesday, before being stopped by an injunction they filed. General Ehud Barak, the army chief of staff, told the court that the expulsions were a necessary blow against Hamas and the Islamic Jihad organisation in response to a wave of attacks in the past ten days in which six members of the security forces were killed.

The violence culminated in the kidnapping and killing of Sergeant Major Nissim Toledano, the border policeman whose body was found on Tuesday in the occupied West Bank. "There is a substantial danger of escalation of this phenomenon if we do not stop it," General Barak said. "To return them now would cause more severe damage and be interpreted as a moral victory for dangerous fundamentalist forces."

Mr Rabin, whose cabinet approved the move with one abstention, David Libai, the justice minister, said: "There was the need to act first and

foremost for security, to take steps that as far as we are aware have the chance to hurt the organisation [Hamas], its leadership and inciters, and to help the search for its murderous hard core."

Britain, acting as president of the EC, urged Israel not to carry out the deportations, which it described as violating the fourth Geneva Convention. Jordan condemned the expulsions. Mahmoud al-Sharif, the information minister, added he did not approve of the policeman's killing.

In Washington, Arab delegations yesterday boycotted final meetings of the eighth round of Middle East peace talks and the Palestinians claimed the expulsions would deal the talks a death blow. Speaking before the expulsions were authorised, Hanan Ashrawi, the Palestinian spokeswoman, claimed the deportations had bought the talks to the "brink of the abyss". The Israeli delegation regretted the boycott but said the deportees were "fundamentalist terrorists".



Mustafa: denounced Israeli 'barbarism'

Arafat faction fears swoop will bolster fundamentalist threat to leadership

BY CHRISTOPHER WALKER, MIDDLE EAST CORRESPONDENT

ISRAEL'S sweeping retaliation against Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement, and the attacks which prompted it have confirmed the emergence of a new rival to the Palestine Liberation Organisation and those moderate Arab states that also support the peace process.

Founded in 1987, Hamas, meaning "zeal" in Arabic, is a relative newcomer to the Arab-Israeli conflict. But it already claims the backing of 40 per cent of the 1.8 million Palestinians living in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Like fundamentalist movements gathering strength in other parts of the Middle East, notably Algeria, Jordan and Egypt, its popularity is derived from a combination of violence and a welfare

network based around the mosques. "It is not so much that people support Hamas's ideology," said a West Bank supporter of Fatah, the main PLO faction led by Yasser Arafat. "It is that they see Hamas are tough. While our negotiators in Washington are getting nowhere, they are pushing the Israelis."

Few doubt that the recent spate of spectacular attacks, including the kidnapping and murder of Sergeant Major Nissim Toledano, of the border police, were in part designed to provoke an Israeli crackdown which would then further threaten the future of the already fragile peace talks. Israel claims that Fatah still accounts for the biggest number of attacks on Israelis, such as fire-bombings and stonings. But Fatah

members have watched popular support erode as Hamas has staged headline-grabbing attacks on Israeli targets.

Israeli intelligence maintains that Hamas receives finance from Iran and Saudi Arabia, which is still taking revenge on the PLO for its pro-Iraqi policy in the Gulf war. The rapid rise of Hamas and its military wing has embarrassed those Arab countries which support the Palestinian cause but are fighting Islamic extremists at home. *Al-Ahram*, the Cairo daily and mouthpiece of a government that has detained more than 700 fundamentalists in the past week, claimed yesterday: "Despite ... common ground, there is a marked difference between a movement such as the Algerian Islamic Salvation

Front ... on the one hand and Hamas on the other: with Hamas, the avowed enemy is an occupying power and not the state *per se*."

In addition to its tough image among the young, dispossessed Palestinian camp dwellers, Hamas has gained prominence by presenting a squeaky-clean administration in contrast to the alleged corruption surrounding the PLO. Many moderate Palestinians yesterday expressed dismay at the blanket nature of Israel's response to the latest violence, predicting that in the long run it would only increase Hamas's standing and its ability to call on outside funding. Hamas has upped the stakes in its attempt to replace the PLO as the voice of the Palestinian majority.

NEWS IN BRIEF

UN to send peace force to Maputo

New York The United Nations is to send 7,500 troops, police and civilians to Mozambique in an ambitious new peacekeeping operation in Africa (James Bone writes).

Five battalions of peacekeeping troops with added logistical support will oversee the demobilisation of rival forces under the peace accord signed in Rome in October by the former Marxist government in Maputo and the Renamo rebel movement after 14 years of civil war.

Hundreds of civilian United Nations staff, aided by a small UN police contingent, will mount a humanitarian operation to resettle six million refugees, and organise polls for next year.

Cholera fears

Manure: Concerns about sanitation rose in Maumere, on Flores island, Indonesia, as ten cases of cholera were reported. Decomposing bodies are still pinned under buildings which were destroyed by the earthquake and seismic wave last weekend. (AP)

Rebel jailed

Umu: Military judges sentenced Martha Huatay, 49, a Shining Path guerrilla leader, to life imprisonment and fined her £6.33 million. Huatay was a close associate of Abimael Guzman, founder of the Peruvian rebel movement. (AFP)

Trial for troops

Algiers: Ninety Algerian army officers and soldiers will face trial on Sunday for plotting against the state with Muslim fundamentalist guerrillas. *El Waatan* newspaper reported. They are said to be facing the death penalty for plotting to destabilise the army. (AFP)

Baby talk

India, California: A California woman is suing Prince Albert of Monaco, saying he fathered her eight-month-old daughter, Jazmin Grace Grimaldi, and broke a promise to help support the child. Royal lawyers refuse to confirm or deny the allegation. (AP)

US accused of 'Al Capone' plan for aid in Somalia

FROM SAM KILEY IN BAIDOA

AMERICAN political and military officials are planning to employ former Somali gunmen as security guards in Baidoa, where American and French troops arrived earlier this week to restore order to the town in the heartland of the country's famine.

The news, which emerged from a meeting between aid agencies working in the region, representatives of Lieutenant General Robert Johnston, the commander of allied forces in Somalia, and Robert Oakley, Washington's special envoy to Somalia, was greeted with horror by many of the relief workers.

"It is the stupidest thing that I have heard in years," one director of an aid agency who attended the meeting said. "The Americans have been here for just over 24 hours and they think that they are experts. Don't they realise that Somalia's problems cannot be solved by the flick of a switch? Don't they realise why they have been sent? To stop the gunmen from looting food and extorting money from us, not to give them uniforms."

American officials have been anxious to show that the presence of foreign soldiers in Somalia is only temporary and that it is important to rebuild Somalia's systems of administration as quickly as possible. But relief workers were critical of the speed at which the planners are trying to achieve that objective.

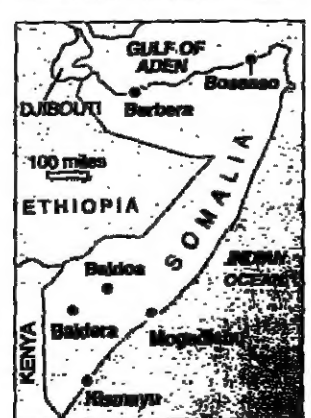
The Americans suggested that the now disarmed "airport security" gunmen, who had been wresting thousands of dollars a week from relief agencies in airport landing fees and had occasionally beaten off looting groups of other gunmen, could be used to form a local police force.

Another aid director, who thought that the American principles were sound, said: "The local governor was behind the looting of care trucks on November 11. The local police chief was one of the prime movers in looting. And both of them are now attending meeting with senior American soldiers and even the US ambassador. It is like putting Al Capone in charge of a bank." He added: "They [the

Americans] should actually find out who these people are and what is going on before suggesting this sort of thing so quickly. This operation must take weeks, not months."

The plan emerged as news came that a convoy of lorries from Catholic Relief Services, the American charity, was attacked and partly looted at Awdinle, 20 miles west of Baidoa. US Marines had been promised to the charity to protect the convoy, but the offer was withdrawn yesterday morning after a severe rainstorm drenched the Marines in their fox holes. Villagers said that many "technicals", the heavily armed Jeeps used by Somali gunmen, swept into Awdinle from their base at Bortale, 15 miles to the west, and stole much of the food.

French Foreign Legionnaires and US Marines escort



ed a convoy for the first time yesterday into the countryside around Baidoa, taking 100 tonnes of food to four villages north of the town. Aid workers remain anxious that the allied forces should penetrate deeper into the rural areas to prevent more attacks on villages.

"They have to get out and about as soon as possible," Locken Morrissey, the director of Care International's operation in Baidoa, said. "If they don't, then they will simply leave the most vulnerable population at the mercy of the gunmen who have fled the arrival of real soldiers."

Social Democratic Party, threatened to block what would be the first out-of-area deployment of German combat troops since the war (Patrick Moser writes).

At a news conference, Herr Kohl said he intended to tell Boutros Boutros Ghali, the United Nations secretary-general, that a battalion of up to 1,500 German troops could be sent to Somalia as part of the international relief effort. They would include engineering and communications troops and also "support and self-defence troops". Defence ministry sources said the plan called for infantry to protect German soldiers who would participate in relief work.

Friedrich Bohl, a chancellor's minister, rejected suggestions that the proposed German deployment would violate a constitutional clause that the government previously said prohibited out-of-area missions by armed German soldiers. Some conservative politicians have argued that because the operations in Somalia are of a humanitarian nature, the constitutional restrictions do not apply.

But Björn Engholm, the leader of the Social Democrats, called the plan "an outright provocation". He said that if the government tried to go ahead with it, "then the issue has to be taken to the constitutional court".

The German government hopes to pass a constitutional amendment early next year, but officials said German troops could participate in a mission to Somalia even before the amendment is tabled in parliament. In a remark aimed at the Social Democratic Party, which has suggested that Germany should seek a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, Herr Kohl said: "UN membership means not only rights but also duties. One cannot reconcile with this responsibility any further delay in the clarification of our participation in the peacekeeping and peace-making missions of the UN."

Herr Kohl made clear that he was determined that Germany should no longer be seen as sitting on the sidelines as others risked their lives.

RAISED IN THE HIGHLANDS



Buoyant Milosevic can afford to ride out the West's rage



Milosevic suspected by America of war crimes

THE West is wading into the Serbian presidential elections in a last-minute effort to sway voters against Slobodan Milosevic, the incumbent, who is seen as the political mastermind behind the Bosnian war. By identifying Mr Milosevic as a suspected war criminal, Lawrence Eagleburger, the American Secretary of State, has raised the stakes. If the State Department regards him as responsible for crimes against humanity, how is he to be treated if he wins the election on Sunday? Can the West still negotiate with him or will it be committed to toppling the Serbian leader by any means? The state-controlled Serbian media remove any reference to the war crimes charge, but the news has spread through Belgrade, thanks to foreign radio broadcasts.

The accusation throws a

If Serbia's leader wins the presidential election, his strategy in Bosnia could wrongfoot America and Europe, Roger Boyes writes



pall of uncertainty over the campaign. In opinion polls, Milan Panic, prime minister of the rump Yugoslavia, is 6 per cent ahead of Mr Milosevic, but both are well below the 50 per cent needed to win in the first round.

Mr Milosevic controls the state television — and therefore the information flow to the countryside, where the bulk of his voters live. He also holds sway at the national bank, commands the loyalty of the police machine and the sympathy of most army offi-

cers. That will probably be enough to secure him victory.

Workers have been given wage rises in recent months, the unemployed have been awarded bigger dole payments and peasants have been paid promptly for their crops: all that with money printed by the national bank at Mr Milosevic's behest. The state television has presented all this as evidence that the economy is booming despite UN sanctions. If Mr Milosevic should stumble in the first round on Sunday, all the

instruments of power will be turned against Mr Panic and the opposition.

So overt Western attempts to unseat Mr Milosevic may backfire. That is why the co-chairmen of the Geneva conference, Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen, have chosen a more subtle appeal to the Serbian voters. "We express our hope that this election will choose the cause of peace, and not the policies of war," they said. Since Mr Milosevic has presided over three wars in 18 months (against Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia), that was plainly lobbying in favour of Mr Panic. To go further would reinforce the paranoid factions in the Serbian Socialist Party and their ultra-nationalist supporters.

The fact is that the West is making little impact on the policies of Mr Milosevic. He

has reluctantly put his signature to a number of ceasefires — and ignored them. He attended the London peace conference in August, but did so grudgingly, generally treating the proceedings as if they had nothing to do with him.

Mr Milosevic has his own strategy and all the tortured European debates — whether to recognise Croatia, Bosnia and, now, Macedonia — play little part in his calculations. Analysts believe that soon after Mr Milosevic wins the election on Sunday he will cement a bargain with Croatia that defines spheres of influence and effectively ends the fighting in Bosnia. That could wrongfoot the West as it moves to boost its military presence in Bosnia.

When the Serbs have eased their campaign, Bosnian Muslims have intensified their

fighting to try to scratch back their land. So by the time the West is in a position to command the skies over Bosnia, the main combatants may well appear to be the Muslims.

The West and Mr Milosevic are thus talking in quite different languages. The idea of the co-chairmen is that Bosnia should become a decentralised republic of about ten provinces, each with a wide degree of autonomy. At the same time, "ethnic cleansing" should be reversed, with Muslim families encouraged to return to their more or less autonomous provinces.

As long as there is no political will to enforce this constitutional solution, however, it remains a fantasy. Who would protect the Muslim provinces? Who would guarantee the security of the returning families? How many

years, how many soldiers, would be needed to create such a United Nations protectorate?

Mr Milosevic is a consummate power politician. Serbs hold more than two thirds of Bosnia and there are no pressing reasons for them to surrender land.

The West is rightly concerned that the principle of "ethnic cleansing", if recognised in Yugoslavia, would set a dangerous precedent in other countries of the region. Yet it is difficult to see how any peace formula can work without accepting the reality of large displaced populations.

Mr Milosevic knows that as long as these contradictions exist he, and not Geneva, dictates the ebb and flow of war. That can continue as long as Mr Milosevic is impregnable in Serbia.

Britons join the Bosnian battle

FROM ADAM LEBOR IN CENTRAL BOSNIA

THE scene was typically Bosnian: the verdant landscape of rippling hills and muddy tracks, with the never ending soundtrack of Serbian guns firing from their frontline positions just over a mile away.

However, the Bosnian soldiers' voices carrying over the din of war were speaking in the accents of northern England, the Midlands and Scotland. The four men had faces daubed with camouflage paint and said they had just returned from the front line near by.

All had served in the British army and said they had come to Bosnia to fight for a cause they believed was just. "I came here after seeing the pictures of the Serb camp Omarska on television," Pete, a Midlander, said. "I thought that something had to be done even if I had to fight by myself." All were in their early or mid twenties, and would not give their real names.

"Fighting in this kind of terrain is difficult, especially when you haven't got any good weapons or back-up," John, from northern England, said. "People think we are stupid or mad. But a soldier is a soldier and is trained to be one."

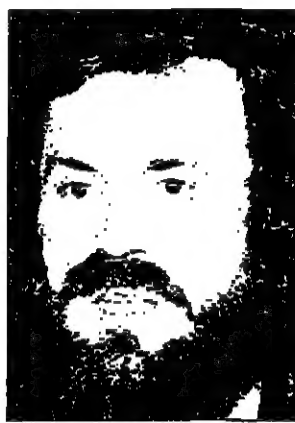
John claimed he had witnessed atrocities carried out by Serb fighters. "At the moment, the Chetniks are taking great pride in crucifixions in northern Bosnia, near Brcko," he said. The soldiers said that there were Russians and Romanians, as well as a group of Britons, fighting on the Serb side.

The quartet are among several dozen Britons fighting on the Bosnian side, but say they are not mercenaries. They are paid about £7 a month and live mainly on beans and rice. Earlier, we had met a man from Derby, a field medic in fatigues, looking for a hospital near by. Two days previously, Simon, a computer programmer from Blackpool, had appeared in Kiseljak, outside Sarajevo, carrying his rifle.

Russian MPs vote to prevent foreign intervention in Yugoslavia

Serb opposition appeals for the end of dictatorship

By TIM JUDAH IN BELGRADE AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF



Draskovic called for peace and democracy

MORE than 100,000 people opposed to Slobodan Milosevic, the Serbian president, gathered in Belgrade yesterday for the opposition rally. "The eyes of the world are on you," Vuk Draskovic, the opposition leader, told them. "We are the epicentre of great hope that war can be turned to peace, death to life, and totalitarianism into democracy."

Milan Panic, the prime minister of the rump Yugoslavia, is fighting Mr Milosevic for the presidency. Mr Milosevic spent his last day of electioneering in the predominantly Albanian-populated province of Kosovo, where he made his career by returning the whip of power back to local Serbs. Albanians are set on boycotting the poll.

The election campaign intensified as the Russian parliament proclaimed that the threat of foreign armed intervention in the former Yugoslavia had become "real" and called on the Russian government to take "necessary steps" to prevent it. A resolution in Moscow, approved by 151 votes to five, also called on the government to continue working with the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, but left open the possibility of Russia using its veto "in the case of extreme necessity".

The parliament demanded that the government "take the necessary steps to avoid [outside] armed intervention and the progressive escalation of

the conflict in the territory of the former Yugoslavia". The resolution from Russia's conservative-dominated parliament came as diplomats from America, Britain, France and Germany were weighing the possibility of using military force to enforce a "no-fly zone" over Bosnia. The Moscow vote may lead to the end of the unqualified backing Russia has given so far to UN resolutions against Serbia.

As Sunday's election approaches, Mr Milosevic has been fighting the "pig war". The country is no stranger to sanctions, he reminds voters. In 1906 the Austro-Hungarian empire embargoed Serbian pork in the so-called "pig war", but Serbia lived to tell the tale and the empire did not. What about 1948 when Stalin froze heretical Yugoslavia out of the Communist fold?

It survived too. Mr Milosevic does not remind his electors that, unlike today, Belgrade had other friends in 1906 and 1948. During the Cold war, America poured in money and guns as if there were no tomorrow.

"Sanctions are a challenge," Mr Milosevic says, and claims they are stimulating the economy. The figures say something different. Sanctions and general economic collapse have left 40 per cent unemployed and inflation is running at 28,000 per cent a year.

Voters will be nothing if not confused when they cast their ballots in the Yugoslav, Serbian and Montenegrin elections. While Mr Milosevic rans about pigs, Mr Panic has been yelling about dogs. Serbian television, firmly under the control of Mr Milosevic, has labelled Mr Panic a "mafioso" and CIA agent. He has hit back calling them "dogs".

Western election observers say they are shocked by the blatant misuse of the state media by Mr Milosevic's Socialist party. Several hours of news and comment every day are devoted to Mr Milosevic and his activities, while Mr Panic's doings are reported only briefly.

The opposition cites examples of what it claims are blatant vote buying. Thousands of laid-off workers in an industrial suburb of Belgrade have suddenly received generous lump-sum payments.

Farmers have had taxes postponed, and in Zrenjanin, the constituency of Radovan Bozovic, the Serbian prime minister, farmers have suddenly been paid for last summer's crop. Opposition supporters have also been encouraged to check the electoral rolls after it was discovered that many people who had listened to the opposition call to boycott the last election had mysteriously been struck from the lists.

Rumours are racing around Belgrade that Serbian television is preparing a blockbuster hatchet job on Mr Panic to be screened just before the poll. Vladislav Jovanovic, the Serbian foreign minister, hints that he has documents proving Mr Pan-



Sarajevo sorrow: Mirza Kafenovic, 14, and his mother visiting the grave of his father for the first time since he was killed by a mortar bomb two months ago

ic's collusion with Serbia's enemies. Mr Panic does little to help himself. He plays into the hands of Mr Milosevic by surrounding himself with American advisers and pollsters, who tell Serbs that their client is leading Mr Milosevic by 4 per cent. Even more unhelpful to his campaign is his habit of giving press conferences in English which are then translated for Serbian journalists.

The question of Serbs in

Bosnia and Croatia does not rank high on the agenda because opposition and government tend to agree on Serbian objectives, but Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader, has made clear that he would prefer Mr Milosevic to be president.

A meeting yesterday of the Bosnian Serb parliament to declare a unilateral end to the war seemed designed to impress Serbian voters rather than anyone else because

Serbs cannot end the war if the other parties keep fighting. □ Belgrade: Milovan Djilas, 82, Yugoslavia's most famous dissident, who fell from grace nearly 40 years ago for advocating multiparty politics and a free market, will be rehabilitated, the Tanjug news agency reported. Mr Djilas, a war hero, will be formally forgiven and his military medals restored.

Leading article, page 15

NEWS IN BRIEF

Moscow is chided over missing Americans

Moscow: American diplomats charged the Russian government yesterday with failing to provide adequate information on the fate of American servicemen believed to have been missing in or near the Soviet Union during the Cold war (Robert Seely writes).

Malcolm Toon, the former US ambassador who jointly heads the Russian-US commission investigating the fate of US prisoners of war, said: "The American public, the American government and I will simply fail to understand why the Russian government cannot ultimately come up with the information that we need."

Mr Toon accepted the Kremlin's statement that there were no missing US servicemen now alive in the former Soviet Union.

Clinton cabinet taking shape

Washington: Bill Clinton, the president-elect, is preparing to announce more senior appointments including more blacks and a first Hispanic in keeping with his promise of an administration that "looks like America". Mr Clinton will name his top foreign affairs appointees next week. His Secretary of State is likely to be Warren Christopher, the former Carter administration official. Les Aspin is front-runner for Defence Secretary.

Aids outrage

Paris: Associations representing more than 1,200 haemophiliacs infected with Aids-tainted blood said the National Assembly's refusal to charge any of the three former cabinet ministers implicated in France's worst medical scandal was cowardly, shameful, and a Nazi crime. (AF)

Craxi defiant

Rome: Bettino Craxi, the Italian Socialist leader, hit back last night at the "odious climate" created by his critics and refused to resign as party secretary in spite of being formally implicated by magistrates in Italy's biggest bribery scandal since the war.

Wörner stays

Brussels: The Nato allies signalling a desire for stability at a time of change in Europe, have extended by three years the term of Manfred Wörner as the organisation's secretary-general, sources said. (AF)

American shot

Paris: Gilbert Beaud, 65, the French pop star, shot and slightly wounded an American serviceman at a quayside on the Seine. The incident occurred when the American, who appeared to have been drinking, took Beaud's home, a barge, for a floating restaurant. (AFP)

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Consumers see single market as a sham

FROM TOM WALKER IN BRUSSELS

THE main consumers' organisation in the European Community yesterday accused the Commission of "misleading advertising" on the European single market, now only two weeks away.

In the most damning indictment yet of the market, BEUC, which is made up of the main consumer associations in the EC, said: "There will be no single market for Europe's consumers on January 1, 1993, and probably not for many years to come."

In an extensive and meticulously researched document, the Brussels-based group managed to pick holes in many of the EC directives that are meant to have produced a market without trade barriers. The group pointed out derogations and compromises that will keep consumers locked in the protectionist traps of their domestic markets. The group criticised the provisions of the

market for food, insurance, cars, medicines, toys, furniture, televisions and video recorders, banking, telecommunications, postal services, energy, and air transport.

Meanwhile, the British presidency of the Community seemed to spend the entire day congratulating itself for completing the market. John Gummer, the agriculture minister, was positively radiant after finalising details of the new common agricultural policy. "Britain has been the pioneer of the single market," he said. "It is our great contribution to European unity, extending from Scotland to Sicily, from the Atlantic to what used to be the border of East Germany."

Lapsing into almost Churchillian rhetoric, Mr Gummer summed up: "It is a proud moment for the British people; we called for it, we fought for it, we won it."

Mitterrand 'not cured of cancer'

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS IN PARIS

THE first health bulletin issued since President Mitterrand's prostate surgery three months ago indicates that his cancer is not spreading, but nor is it responding fully to treatment.

The bulletin, issued by the French president's personal physician, said that the health of Mitterrand, 76, was good apart from the prostate cancer. However, the report said "the dosage of the antigen, which had diminished after the operation, is still higher than normal". Dr Richard Fourcade of the French Association of Urologists said: "This is not a good prognosis and shows that Mitterrand is responding insufficiently to treatment."

Gummer dismisses attack on Gatt deal

BY TOM WALKER AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

JOHN Gummer, the agriculture minister, angrily dismissed yesterday France's latest objection to the European Community's accord with the United States on farm subsidies. But a senior American official said the state of the latest round of negotiations on the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade has become "exceedingly grim".

Roland Dumas, the French foreign minister, has upset the talks by his claim that the European Commission's document outlining the accord, presented to the Gatt authorities in Geneva on Wednesday, was "null and void". Mr Gummer said M Dumas had stepped out of line. "I am not concerned at all. I don't think that sounds like it's got any connection with life at all," he said.

M Dumas' quotes have been seized upon by American negotiators, who now doubt

whether the Commission has the authority to negotiate on behalf of the Community. "There is reason to question whether the EC can now make a credible offer," an official said. "The picture is exceedingly grim," he added. "It does not look as if we'll be able to conclude there are now too many problems out there."

Mr Gummer and the Commission seemed reluctant to admit that France's level of resistance to further Gatt negotiations remains dangerously high. A spokesman for Frans Andriessen, the Commission's chief Gatt negotiator, said Brussels had "no evidence that anyone will block" its submission to Geneva. Mr Gummer said: "There is no visible support for any interruption in those negotiations." He said if there were American fears, then they were no more than tactical.

Yeltsin snubs America by offering China weapons for cash

■ The Russian president, accused by hardline domestic critics of pro-Western bias, is ready to do business with Peking's Communists

FROM ANNE MCELVOY IN MOSCOW AND CATHERINE SAMPSON IN PEKING

PRESIDENT Yeltsin appointed Yegor Gaidar as his personal adviser on economic policy yesterday and flew into Peking to announce that there were "great prospects" for military co-operation between Russia and China.

The president pledged increased arms deals with China in a signal to Washington that if the West will not give him the aid he needs, he will turn towards the East for hard cash.

"We are accused of looking too much towards the West," he told the Chinese on arrival, "but this second breakthrough in Asia — first South Korea, now China — gives natural balance to our foreign policy. The decades of stagnation, the absence of any co-operation between our two mighty nations, which share a common border 2,500 miles long, were simply unnatural."

Before setting off on his state visit to China on a tour intended to thaw the frosty relations between the two countries and lay the ground for a potentially profitable arms trade, Mr Yeltsin appeared to have persuaded key radical ministers not to desert his cabinet.

The appointment of Mr Gaidar, cast aside earlier this week as the acting prime minister, is intended to show

that, although he might have lost full control of the government, he will still fight to keep hold of the reins of general policy and to keep as many of his old team around him as possible. Mr Gaidar becomes the Russian leader's right-hand man and will head a new Moscow institute researching the problems of economic transition.

The Russian leader talked to reporters as he climbed the steep incline of China's most ancient defence installation, the Great Wall, built to keep out invaders from the North. "We plan to discuss military co-operation in our negotiations, probably tomorrow. In the old days of the former Soviet Union a lot of military technology came here. To restore it, spare parts and personnel are needed."

Spare parts, however, are just the beginning. There is no love lost between China's Communist leadership and the man who buried communism in the Soviet Union. Peking, however, in its usual pragmatic way, is prepared to do business with Mr Yeltsin, and is buying Russian armaments as fast as Moscow can sell them. It has already taken delivery of 24 Su-27 fighter jets and negotiating for MiG31s. Recently it was reported that Russia plans to pay

off £318 million of its £637 million debt to China in the form of military hardware. Peking is also believed to have recruited Russian weapons scientists.

There is speculation that Moscow and Peking may be turning towards each other to alarm the Americans into improving its relations with both, providing more aid for Russia and no-strings-attached trade for China. By coincidence, the visit of Barbara Franklin, the American commerce secretary, to Peking this week signalled an upturn in China's relations with America, and a return to the visits banned after the suppression of the pro-democracy movement in 1989.

Photograph, page 18



Heading for the dock Lorrain Osman, the Malaysian former banker, being led to court in Hong Kong yesterday to face charges of theft, corruption and conspiracy to defraud in connection

with the collapse of one of the colony's best known companies in the 1980s. He did not enter a plea. Mr Osman, who is 61 today, will plead for bail before another court on Monday. He

stayed off extradition from Britain for seven years until Wednesday. A native of Malaysia, but resident in London since 1984, Mr Osman was Britain's longest-serving remand prisoner. (AP)

Cambodian guerrillas seize 46 UN men

FROM AGENCY FRANCE-PRESSE IN PHNOM PENH

KHMER Rouge guerrillas in central Cambodia took captive another 46 United Nations peacekeepers yesterday after releasing 21 captives earlier in the day, a UN official said.

A Khmer Rouge official in Kompong Thom province ordered the detention of the second group, the UN said. The 46 Indonesians and their Khmer Rouge captors were fully armed, and the UN did not rule out an armed confrontation. "There is a potential for conflict which we are trying to avoid," said Eric Falt, the official.

"We are a peacekeeping force in Cambodia to monitor and maintain peace," he declared. "We are not going to go shoot our way out of this. Since both are fully armed, we have to use negotiations."

The Khmer Rouge official said he would release the captives only on the written order of General Men Ron, his commander, who was with his own forces some distance north of Kompong Thom.

Tycoon holds key to Korean election

BY JOANNA PITMAN

SOUTH Koreans today elect their first civilian president for more than 30 years, the man who will inherit the unsteady democracy introduced by President Roh Tae Woo six years ago.

Mr Roh is constitutionally barred from running for a second term. His successor will be chosen from two veteran dissidents of past military dictatorships and a business tycoon aged 77. All three favour democratic development, free markets and the peaceful reunification of Korea. Their platforms are so close that the race is largely one of personalities rather than policies.

A month ago, Kim Yong Sam, the candidate of the ruling Democratic Liberal Party, was highly tipped. He has been endorsed implicitly by Mr Roh and represents stability, an attractive prospect for the predominantly conservative-minded electorate. Over the past week, however, favour has swung to Kim Dae Jung, of the main opposition Democratic Party. Aged 67, he is a

long-time opposition fighter who has survived prison and even a death sentence.

Mr Kim Dae Jung has closed the gap largely by default. Earlier this week a smear campaign against him by provincial members of the ruling party was exposed. But what has helped him most is the entry into the race of Chung Ju Yung, the founder of Hyundai, South Korea's largest industrial conglomerate, who handed over day-to-day control of the company to his son in January when he set up his own United People's Party. Mr Chung has been winning support at the expense of Mr Kim Yong Sam, tipping the balance in favour of Mr Kim Dae Jung.

By yesterday, about 40 per cent of the electorate had not made up their minds. South Koreans have heard candidates extolling the virtues of their young democracy, yet most voters are more concerned about rising inflation, housing costs, unemployment and bankruptcies.

Keating swears to fire the Windsors

FROM ROBERT COCKBURN IN SYDNEY

As if to distance himself yet further from the House of Windsor, Paul Keating, the Australian prime minister, yesterday announced that new citizens will in future swear an oath of allegiance to country rather than Queen.

For Mr Keating, who is campaigning to dump the Queen as head of state in favour of an independent republic, dropping the oath of allegiance to Her Majesty follows a number of criticisms he has made of the royal family.

But yesterday proved even more revealing for the future of Anglo-Australian relations. As a result of Australia's worsening economic recession, 25 per cent of Qantas, the national airline and status symbol, was sold to British Airways to raise about £300 million in desperately needed public funds. The sale was opposed by anti-British elements, who funded a poster at Sydney's international airport saying "Piss off Poms. No British Airways ownership of Qantas".

These sentiments failed to influence Mr Keating, and raised fierce criticism from Stephan Kerkayasharian, the chairman of the ethnic affairs commission, who condemned the poster attack as racist. It is an interesting point in a coun-

try where a grudging respect for British culture has always been measured by outspoken criticism. By defending the sensitivities of British migrants, as he would any of Australia's ethnic minorities, Mr Kerkayasharian has subtly redefined Britain's changing status down under.

The decision to drop the oath of allegiance to the Queen provoked conflicting responses last night. The federal cabinet in Canberra chose to adopt the new oath to reflect modern Australia and its national aspirations. Mr Keating said that a fresh preamble to the new Citizenship Act would define citizenship as a common bond which involved reciprocal rights and obligations that united all Australians.

Opponents of the republican movement have accused Mr Keating of again using the issue to distract attention from Australia's economic crisis. Lloyd Waddy, QC, head of the Australian monarchist movement, said: "There is no oath of allegiance to a foreign Queen. The only oath is to the Queen of Australia, and these lies and falsehoods that are put around are doing great disservice to the people of this country."

Can babies benefit from a healthy breakfast even before they're conceived?

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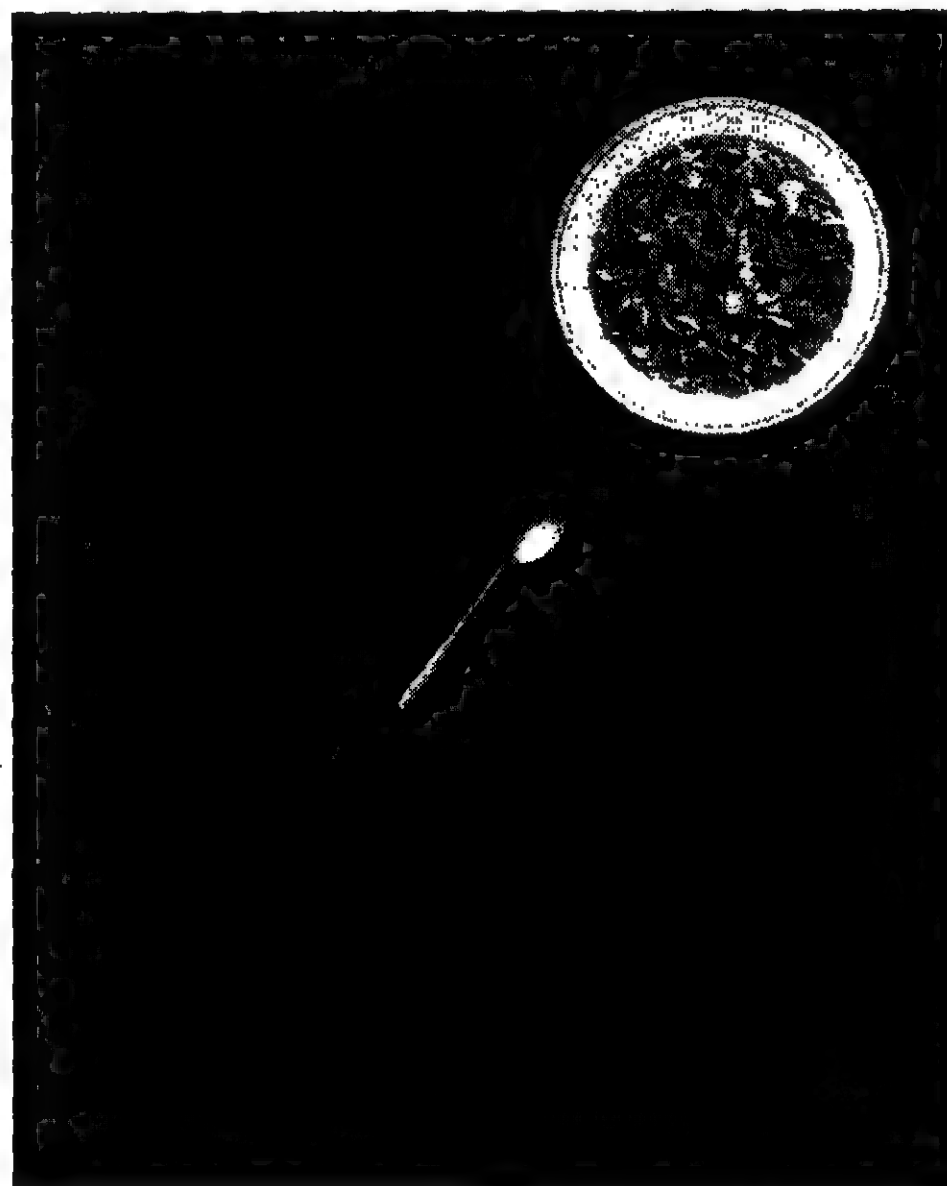
It is recommending that all women of child-bearing age significantly increase their daily intake of both Folic Acid and Folate.

(A wise precaution when you consider that over half of all pregnancies are unplanned.)

So what is the best way to do this?

Not surprisingly, you need to eat more of the right foods.

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Surprising though such findings may seem, they really just serve to emphasise one thing.

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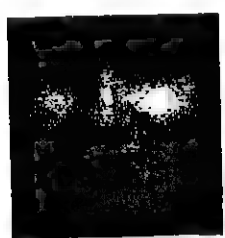
ALAN WELLS

Take the head of a charity group, a dollop of entrepreneurial spirit, and endless zest: the finished product is Jane Tewson

"If we had a keen vision and feeling of all ordinary human life, it would be like hearing the grass grow and the squirrel's heartbeat, and we should die of that roar that lies on the other side of silence. As it is, the quickest of us walk about well wadded with stupidity."

I think of George Eliot's words as I negotiate the cordoned-off streets after the Oxford Street bombing. I step over the toothless bag lady in the doorway of the dark and rainy street, and find the first-floor office where Jane Tewson runs her Charity Projects empire. Here she takes from them that hath, giving to them that do not. In this office, even the coffee in the coffee machine (from Coffee Exchange), the loo paper (from Kleenex) and their car parking space (from NCP) are gifts. There is no company so unacceptably capitalist, so Ebenezer Scrooge-like that it cannot give something. It

THE VALERIE GROVE INTERVIEW



saves their conscience, you cynically and rightly say. But that is the impulse into which the entrepreneurial Ms Tewson has tapped, since 1984.

I am here because it is Christmas: season of huddling credit cards recklessly across the counters of department stores, and then stepping out among the destitute and being stricken with collective, charitable guilt.

"Oh, the guilt," she says. "We're all spending hundreds of pounds on our children and families and we think, God, there's that old bag lady again. And it's cold and wet out there."

But Ms Tewson, begetter of the biennial Red Nose days and Comic Relief, is a woman in the mould of the Victorian philanthropists Angela Burdett-Coutts and Eglantyne Jebb: women with spirit and energy who, seeing how unjustly organised the world is, change it. Charity Projects has raised £75 million since it started in 1984, and every pound goes to projects that improve lives.

"People still think charity is just about giving money. But — she seizes a dictionary — 'Charity: Leniency or tolerance in judging others; unwillingness to think badly of people... loving kindness towards others.' It's about enabling people to change their lives."

She has turned charity into a brilliant bartering business. You have to get the right kinds of service to the right people without incurring any unnecessary expense. Everyone marvels at her ability to get people to give services and products. Woolworth even sent a human helper. I am surprised to learn that Ms Tewson needs someone to give her free washing up liquid and cleaning fluids: anyone got any to spare?

"If you're asking for help, the world is your oyster. Everybody wants to give, she says. 'They rarely say no.'"

She is 33 and six months pregnant. There is a poignant about knowing the wrenching state the world is in — and she knows it well, having been in Somalia and the Sudan (she met her anthropologist husband through their African work) and working so closely with the young homeless and the disabled here — and yet feeling ecstatically happy at the prospect of giving birth. She could not have wished for a happier childhood herself. Her parents are both doctors (her father now retired) in the village of Thame in Oxfordshire.

"We grew up with a sense of social responsibility. There were four of us, and mum would visit her patients on



Jane Tewson: "A lot of young kids aren't runaways but throwaways. They don't have a home to go back to, and no access whatever to any funds"

horseback, taking us with her, and make them feel loved and cared for."

It was when she first worked for charities such as Mencap, that she began to get angry. "I was burning, perhaps naively. I wanted to shout about what I felt charity stood for in this country. Let's help those poor little people, when it should be, let's talk to people and find out what they really need. I was depressed by fundraising mischief — like a packet of charity Christmas cards at £3.99, with only 5p going to the charity."

It wouldn't be great to produce a commercially viable product for charity but totally sponsored, and make it sell not just on emotive grounds but because it's fun? Hence the first charity project: the Nether Wallop Arts and Comic Relief.

When she went in search of her first funds, people in City offices would send someone down who would expect "the charity lady" to be old and grey, not young and blonde and fetching. Her success was instantaneous. Tim Bell (now Sir Tim) then at Saatchi and Saatchi, thought her idea was splendid. "He said, 'Here's £12,000 a year, go and do it.' Then Mike Russell Hills, the film-maker, gave us our first office — a brook in D'Arbury Street. Lawyers and accountants gave their services free. That is the spirit we exist on. Anthony Pyle-Jeary of Dewynters does all our design and print work. A real philanthropist who has a very exotic life and loves giving."

"What we are grant-makers: we have money, and

we spend it strategically. We look for projects where people are doing things for themselves, moving out of a state of dependency to independence."

She cannot bear to see money and time not being used for the general good. Could she not pose for her photograph in Mothercare clothes and get them to pay, she asked? When I paid £2 for our cappuccinos, she said: "We should be able to pay twice over, and enable someone else to have one too."

"Even now, people some-

lot of the time we're just funding wages — for people to work on the streets with young homeless. Or with pensioners. We can't claim our money has the most incredible impact — it doesn't. But what we can do is help the unsung heroes out there in the rain now, offering advice and shelter and help to young people sleeping rough."

She knows all too well the popular prejudice: "They could go home if they wanted to," — and some could. "But nobody would live on the streets by choice. And once you're in a doorway, it's very difficult to get out of it. Street culture is a very absorbing camaraderie. There are young girls out there who want nothing more than to get on in life, and do their exams, but they can't do anything until they've got a place to live. You only have to give them a tiny bit of help and you unleash all their energy

and determination and the vitality of youth, and they bounce back. A lot of young kids aren't runaways but throwaways. They don't have a home to go back to, and no access whatever to any funds."

"Homelessness is always with us, but gets a profile at Christmas because we are all celebrating. I'm just as selfish as anyone else. My friends might say, 'Jane, you're so good, working for charity.' But I created for myself the best job in the world. Who could want a better job?"

Today they had allocated the last of their Red Nose money from 1991, making grants to projects for the old, possibly the least appealing of all deserving causes. For instance, they had allocated

£13,000 a year for three years to Arlington House, the dossers' place in Camden Town: what impressed them was that the down-and-outs themselves, of whom nobody expects very much, sit on the management committee of the hostel.

Maggie, one of the project assessors, had just visited a centre in Glasgow run by and for young drug misusers offering sports facilities and counselling. "Their approach is, make people feel good about themselves: a 'positive self-image' programme, with an extremely tough insistence on total abstinence. We don't have a prescriptive view, but we do like places where people in need can help themselves."

Some of the needs are negligible. I pick up a letter at random on her desk and find a request from a centre in north London which wants to equip its centre, where the young unemployed can spend time instead of menacing the neighbourhood: on their list is "£40 for a basketball and a football".

The Charity Projects staff see plainly the absurdity of denying funds to services for short-term economic reasons. If you stop funding a drug misuse programme for the young, you end up paying far more to keep that person in hospital or in jail. When instead, he might have been given a skill and a purpose, and not become a burden to society for life. "To fund a project, and then have the project collapse, means Charity Projects is just pissing in the wind."

"And I am not happy to piss in the wind," Ms Tewson says. "We need to be sure what government policies are, so we can be strategic."

She had stood for seven stops on the London Tube that day, and nobody had offered her a seat. People in London are hard and cold and self-absorbed and she knows all about "compassion fatigue". "Charity is not about giving money: it's about being sensitive to needs around you all the time."

Yet, she says, "What I love about my job is learning that smiling at an old person or giving a loaf of bread or visiting someone or whatever you do, is actually a pleasure. I love giving. Don't you?"

Old view of new Russia

How an English tutor brought Russian imperialism to Oxford

George Gibbs, born in Moscow before the Revolution, is an old man now, 87. It is almost exactly the age that Tsarevich Alexis, heir to all the Russias, would have reached today if he had not been shot dead with all his family in 1918, and thrown into a pit. But between the boy who died and the old exile living in a quiet side-street in Oxford there exists an odd, strong emotional link.

If the bones from that pit in Siberia, now being tested at Aldermaston, are finally proved to be those of the Imperial family, that emotion will grow stronger. DNA tests have already firmly linked the Tsarina's bones to specimens from her great-nephew the Duke of Edinburgh. As more tests take place, the certainty seems likely to grow and to culminate in some sort of official, though politically careful, recognition.

For exiled Russians of Mr Gibbs's generation, the matter of the Tsar is not history, but a matter of serious religious importance. The ruler who the revolutionaries dubbed "Nicholas the Bloody" may now be buried with honour in his own country: to see that day will be, for some of his Orthodox compatriots, almost literally unbelievable.

Until he became infirm, Mr Gibbs guarded a small, touching shrine. A lamp burned before a cross and a portrait of the late Tsar, a collection of sad small domestic possessions lay in glass cases, and a pair of Nicholas II's tall felt boots stood in the corner. Mr Gibbs had special reason to keep them.

In 1908, when Edward VII visited the Imperial family and observed that the young grand-duchesses' English accents were poor, Tsar Nicholas hired a young man from Rotherham, as their tutor. Charles Sydney Gibbs stayed with the family for the last ten years of their lives: in 1913 he took over the teaching of the shy, nine-year-old haemophilic heir, Alexis Nicolaievich. "We looked", wrote the tutor in his diary "at the Golligov's Circus Book. He wrote a letter in coloured chalks for Anastasia. Afterwards we made a paper hat."

Gibbs was there through the family's Siberian exile too, when the grand-duchesses and the increasingly crippled Tsarevich passed their time with him learning "Young Lochinvar", and performing English farcical sketches from the 1890s. The last unrestrained laughter the Empress ever enjoyed, the tutor wrote, was when Grand-Duchess Anastasia's skirt blew up in the course of one performance revealing a set of the Tsar's Jaeger underwear.

Then the family were moved to the infamous "House of Special Purpose", and he never saw them alive again. He kept the children's drawings and exercise-books: after he accepted their death he left to work in China. Here, he met another Russian boy of the dead Alexis's age, who had lost his parents in the Revolution. The boy George became his adopted son. Later, the tutor took Russian Orthodox orders and became Father Nicholas,

in memory of the Tsar. After his adoptive father's death in 1963 George had some of his journals and memorabilia edited (by JC Trewin) and published. The Tsar's portrait by Ryepin was found, rolled in newspapers, never mentioned.

Today George Gibbs is old, "and very tired", but he still lives independently

amid a mass of copies of the old journals and his eye is on the new Russia. He has little faith in it. "One cannot believe anything you hear from Soviet Russia. What? Not Soviet now? You don't believe it. There are bad things done still. Yeltsin talks too much and says it is all superb. Hah! What can you believe?"

Above his head hangs one simple icon, the other relics

having gone to an Orthodox church. "I miss them very much, but it is necessary to put them where they will be kept safe." Should the Tsar be, as some say, canonised? This question brings his brows together with a snap. "He is a saint. As far as I am concerned, he is a saint and martyr."

Among the tutor's papers is



Portrait of Tsar Nicholas II by Ryepin, found after Gibbs's death

a prayer Grand-Duchess Olga wrote out for the family that last Christmas of 1917. "Grant us thy patience, Lord, in these our woful days! The mob's wrath to endure, the torturer's ire... Breathe strength in us to pray. Father, forgive them! The tutor rarely spoke of his pupils, but preserved their writings and his journals, kept the faith and passed it on. In his adopted son it still burns angry as ever."

LIBBY PURVES

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Despite new evidence, one of the great spy mysteries will never be conclusively solved, writes Ben Macintyre in New York

The strange case of Alger Hiss

The opening up of the Soviet archives is an event to make the pulse of every historian quicken. By any standards the secrets of the most deceitful and clandestine empire ever, in the form of millions of documents from the shadows of the Soviet regime, represent a treasure trove without parallel.

At least that is the expectation, but so far the Soviet vaults (now being painstakingly combed) have solved none of the great historical riddles, and have raised more questions than have been answered: a shadowy photograph that may, or may not, be the dead body of Hitler, a suggestion from Boris Yeltsin that proof would emerge of Americans and others held in Soviet prisons, but little of real substance.

Earlier this year, the head of Russia's espionage archives and keeper of the largest mausoleum of state secrets in the world, General Dmitri Volkogonov, announced that the book could now be closed on at least one of the most tantalising of Cold War riddles: the case of Alger Hiss, the so-called liberal, product of Harvard and official of the New Deal and the UN, who was tried and jailed in 1950 after denying under oath that he had passed secrets to the Soviet Union, and whose guilt, or otherwise, has been debated with relentless ferocity for more than 40 years.

In October General Volkogonov stated that "Mr A. Hiss had never and nowhere been recruited as an agent of the intelligence services of the USSR." Not a single document, he said, substantiated the allegations against him and added with feeling "You can tell Mr Alger Hiss that the heavy weight can be lifted from his heart."

Alger Hiss, 88 and partially blind but dapper and doughty still, gave a press conference in New York to say he was delighted that the accusations he had spent nearly half a century denying had finally been proved groundless.

General Volkogonov's statement, of course, proved nothing of the sort and a volley of doubts, mostly from the right, have echoed through the opinion pages of America's newspapers ever since: how could the general claim to have studied all the thousands of relevant documents in less than a month? Why had he not reviewed the most important files of all, relating to the Communist International, or Comintern? Did not the speed and emotion with which the general announced the innocence of Alger Hiss suggest an ulterior motive, a whitewash?

So far from absolving Hiss, or solving the mystery surrounding his activities, the head of the Soviet archive has deepened it, breathing new life into a controversy that will long outlast its participants.

The case of Alger Hiss has less to do with history than politics: the testimony against him, and the literature spawned thereafter, is vast, complex and mostly tedious. Tony Hiss, Alger Hiss's son and a writer at the *New Yorker*, estimates that only some ten people in the world understand the case in its entirety.

Yet the Hiss scandal was a defining event on which almost every American was and is prepared to express a firm, perhaps unshakable opinion based not on history, proof or justice, but on belief. For some Hiss was the victim of an anti-communist lynch-mob, for others he was a traitor lurking beneath a liberal skin. Those images remain today for, as Michael Winnes of the *New York Times* recently pointed out, "the Cold War is over, but the struggle to shape its history is not"; the deeply ingrained ideologies of the Cold War are now playing themselves out in the emerging historiography of today.



Celebrating: Hiss and his wife

One of Hiss's most relentless interlocutors on the House Committee on Un-American Activities was a young congressman named Richard Nixon. Nixon himself agreed that his prominent role in the Hiss affair catapulted him to notoriety and finally, the presidency. Hiss called him "a power-hungry opportunist" and the disgrace of the president is often seen as a vindication of the man he

helped to send to prison for 44 months.

"Leftist celebrators of Hiss's 'innocence' should recork the champagne," snorted an article in the conservative *Washington Times*. "It's time to tear up the history books... Alger Hiss was innocent," wrote Martin Walker of *The Guardian*. Beside these diametrically opposed interpretations, such matters as evidence, or lack of it, and debates over historical method, thoroughness or objectivity are perhaps meaningless.

I spoke to Alger Hiss yesterday. A trail, courteous voice on the end of a telephone in Manhattan, as unflinchingly a symbol of the communist menace now as he was 40 years ago. "I was always confident in an emotional sense that the truth would come out," he said, "but in an intellectual sense, as intimations of my mortality grew, I had to say maybe this would be put off and my son would be the one to clear it up."

Whatever else he may have been, Alger Hiss has been consistent in his own defence, adamant in his proclaimed innocence. "It's been a very joyful occasion," he said of General Volkogonov's announcement, only slightly marred by the

protestations of those who doubt the general's motives. "I think it's rather presumptuous for them to think they know more about the archives than he does," he said of General Volkogonov's critics.

Hiss's satisfaction is a personal one, for he knows, perhaps better than anyone else, that almost no matter what the archives reveal he will probably remain what he has always been: a symbolic bone for ideologues to fight over.

"I am part of the country's demonology," he said and laughed hoarsely. "Important for the mental life of the country. We've had things like this before: the Salem witch trials and attitudes towards blacks in the south. In England you had Titus Oates. The facts are less important. For some people there is a professional as well as an emotional aspect. People have made their livelihood writing books and magazines about my case."

In Russia, as in the West, historians are seeking to come to terms with their history and, as in the West, the divisions between reformers and the old guard, liberals and conservatives will shape the way that history is filtered. When the Berlin Wall

came down and the archives behind the iron curtain promised to yield up their riches, historians rubbed their hands and said the answers to the Cold War conundrums would not be long in coming once headline communism was replaced with historical consensus: was Lee Harvey Oswald working on behalf of the KGB? Was Dag Hammarskjöld assassinated? Was Felix Block a spy? All would be revealed.

There are practical reasons why these questions will probably never be answered definitively. The communists were great hoarders of documents, but they were not in the habit of leaving tracks; as Alexander Dallin, Sovietologist at Stanford, pointed out recently "I'm sure Stalin didn't go out of his way to write on a piece of paper to the head of the secret police." Beria, have Trotsky assassinated?

To judge from the Alger Hiss case when evidence is uncovered, and even more so when it is not, in circumstances where minds are not just made up but closed, the truth may become more, not less elusive.

But then again, if history was simply about finding the truth, how sanctimonious and pedantic it would be, as the British historian E.A. Freeman once remarked, "History is past politics, and politics present history." Sometimes it is hard indeed to tell the difference between the two.

Who should be president of Britain?

Ludovic Kennedy argues that the monarchy has had its day and the time has come for a republic

So wedded are our commentators to the idea of the monarchy that they have shut their eyes to the consideration of anything else. But the monarchy in this country is fast becoming an anachronism. Kings and queens, princes and princesses are the stuff of fairy tales, not of 20th and 21st-century life. The case for an alternative is a reasonable one.

For almost all the 900 years of its existence the monarchy stood apart from us, sustained at first by the political power it wielded, then, as that power passed to parliament, by its symbolic role as the unifier of the people, the spiritual embodiment of the nation. What was essential to it in the 19th century, as Walter Bagehot pointed out, was its mystery and mystique. For many, Shakespeare's "divinity that doth hedge a king" was a simple truth. For a few it still is today.

Until quite recently few subjects knew much about their monarch or the life that he or she led. They cheered as the royal party rolled by in open landaus, waved Union Jacks and belted out the national anthem. Their loyalty if not their love was never in question; but for all of them the monarch was remote. This situation lasted until the Fifties when the arrival of television faced the royal family with a terrible dilemma. Should they ignore it as *infra dig* and be accused of stuffiness or, forgetting Bagehot's warning that too much daylight would destroy the magic, succumb to it?

The Queen remembered Bagehot and with two notable exceptions (the television films *The Royal Family* and *Elizabeth R*) ignored it, thus partly preserving the monarchical mystique. However, her children gradually succumbed to it, agreed to be interviewed and participate in documentaries, even to make fools of themselves in undignified games like *It's a Knockout*. And the more they allowed television to do what it wanted with them, the more they were seen to be no different from the rest of us. The failed marriages of the Queen's children only seem to confirm this.

And yet the pretence of their being different is still maintained.

Royalty must be addressed as "sir" or "ma'am", and be bowed and curtsied to as in Shakespeare's day. Weird customs are still practised, like that of the Lord Chamberlain retreating backwards before the Queen as she advances through the Palace of Westminster.

Too many of the staff of the royal household seem to be living in the past. When I made a film on the career of Richard Dimbleby whose awed commentaries on state occasions did the royal family some service, I asked permission to include the sequence of the Queen's crowning the palace own the copyright of the BBC film). Mr Charles Anson, a press officer at the palace, refused permission on the bizarre grounds that the Queen regarded the event, the most public of her reign and watched all over the world by millions, as an entirely private matter. To compound this dotiness Mr Anson begged me to keep the Queen's decision private.

It is the wholly unusual, indeed almost schizophrenic, lifestyle of the royal family, half the time high-noses a cut above us, half the time as frail and vulnerable as the rest of us, that has attracted the press like a magnet to the real life soap opera.

Throughout our history the monarchy has proved a durable and useful institution, but I believe it has now outlived its usefulness. The trappings of monarchy, the Irish state coach, the cap of maintenance and the paraphernalia of palaces, castles, jewels and pictures beyond price belong more to the glories of an imperialist past than to the shrunken and utilitarian world we live in today.

Yet the more we decline into a secondary power, the more we seem to be obsessed by royalty, almost as if we felt we may have lost everything else but at least we have got that. It encourages us to contemplate our navels, to look inwards rather than outwards to a degree that cannot be healthy either for them or for us.

Consider some of the burdens we

impose on the royal family. The Queen inherited the throne at a time when she knew what she had to do, and for 40 years she has done it superbly well. But take Prince Charles: we have given him an ancient title but left him to decide for himself how he wished to occupy his time. For much of his work in the way of trusts and schemes and charities, great credit is due. But he has also been a controversial figure, holding forth on all sorts of subjects from the decline of the English language to violence on television and sometimes saying worthwhile things and sometimes silly ones. But whether worthwhile or silly, he must know that the publicity given

to them rests solely on who he is. And being an intelligent and sensitive man he must have often wondered about his true worth, how he would have fared had he been born a commoner.

The *Sun* newspaper says he is determined to be king, but from everything I read or hear I would think the opposite to be true. A monarch (unless a bicycling one which for this dynasty I would have thought inconceivable) is nothing if not positioned at one or more removes above his subjects; and if Prince Charles wishes to preserve even a scintilla of the status of kingship, then he must do what his mother has done these past four decades and maintain, more or

less, a dignified silence. Is that what this questing and capable prince wants, to become a figurehead to be wheeled out from time to time on various state occasions, to spend three hours a day (as his mother is said to) reading cables and ambassadorial papers, not to indulge in even the limited expression of views which has meant so much to him in the past?

If I wanted to give the whole thing up, I feel sure there would be few in the country who would oppose him. Indeed some commentators are suggesting that if the Queen lives for another ten or 15 years, he might step down in favour of Prince William. But, having been through what he has been

through, is that really something he would wish for his son? Is it something that Prince William himself would want? And if it isn't, have we the right to inflict it on him?

For the tabloids — and let there be no doubt about this — are not going to let go. They have been asked by the palace to grant Charles and Diana some degree of privacy now to sort their lives out. They may for a week or two but not in the long run. They will keep their own sharp eyes and those of their informants on the estranged pair to see what new relationships each is forming and whether these are likely to lead to anything permanent. And if Charles does step

down in favour of William, they will pursue that young man and his relationships with the same tenacity as they did his father. Legislation may curb the worst of their excesses, but that is about all that can be hoped for.

The tabloids and other sections of the national press are only reflecting what an increasing number of ordinary people are thinking: that however likeable individual members of the royal family may be, the artificiality of the set-up has made the institution anachronistic. I think it almost inescapable that from now on the monarchy will be under siege; and that a time may come when they, as well as we, will begin to ask themselves whether the game is any longer worth the candle.

When you ask monarchists what is wrong with a presidency, they assume you are proposing a political presidency and begin to guffaw. "Who are you going to have then? Lawson, Healey, Kinnock, Howe?" they suggest sarcastically. But a political presidency would be quite wrong for a country where in modern times the head of state has always been above party politics.

The replacement of the monarch by a non-political president would also dispose of a stroke of that other question which seems to be vexing so many — whether a divorced monarch can be Supreme Governor of the Church of England. There was a time when religion, like kingship, was one of the great forces of social cohesion. But in our plural society religious beliefs are no longer an institutional matter but an entirely private one. Such beliefs or lack of them in any potential president should have no bearing on his fitness for office.

What would be needed in a president is a non-controversial and respected figure who might be drawn from the law or the diplomatic service; figures like Lord Scarman or Lord MacKay, or distinguished former ambassadors such as Sir Anthony Acland or Sir Nicholas Henderson. I doubt if the tabloids would be much interested in their private lives.

Such a change, in perhaps 15 years or more from now, would release royalty from the burden of their unnatural and unnecessary position, and, of course, deprive the tabloids of a real-life soap opera for the 21st century.



It's not for me...

FRIENDS of Michael Fabricant may be surprised by an item that heads the Mid-Staffordshire MP's Christmas list. For Fabricant is desperate to get hold of some hardcore pornography.

Not for himself, you understand, but for the Conservative parliamentary media group which hopes to enliven the next session of Parliament by showing interested MPs an explicit compilation from Red Hot Dutch, the unauthorised European satellite channel.

Fabricant, the committee's vice-chairman, and his colleagues are keen to let MPs and other interested parties determine for themselves the merits, or otherwise, of such material. None of the committee has so far seen the channel, he says, and none is a consumer of pornography. "We are serious men. Even if we had the inclination we would not have the time."

As things stand, however, even if the committee had the inclination, it does not have a tape. But not for lack of trying. It has approached the heritage department, which said it had no film. This week Fabricant wrote to the Independent Television Commission inviting a representative to attend a

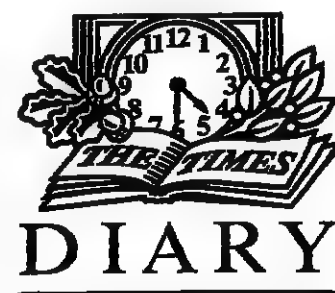
viewing session and help to prepare a report for government. This process would be greatly helped, of course, if the ITC would bring along the tape of Red Hot Dutch's output he believes it has.

The ITC, which will not say whether it has a tape or whether it will lend it if it has, has not yet received Fabricant's letter. But it has already submitted an initial report to the heritage department describing Red Hot Dutch as "an affront to standards of good taste and decency".

Meanwhile the heritage department has yet to decide its stand. Says a spokesman: "We have received the ITC's recommendations and are sympathetic but we are still considering what to do. The picture is rather fuzzy at the moment."

Missing the point

BY UNFORTUNATE coincidence, "Serbian Epics" — part of the BBC2 *Bookmark* series — was screened this week on the very day the American government chose to nominate, among others, Dr Radovan Karadzic, the self-styled leader of the Bosnian Serbs, as a suspected war criminal.



This would have presented few problems were it not for the fact that Karadzic was the central character in a film which was, ostensibly, designed for a literary slot. Karadzic is certainly a poet and the documentary did discuss Serbian history and culture but it has been viewed by some as a virtual party political for the Serb cause.

Fred Barschak, of the Holocaust memorial committee of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, says the programme should have made their audience more aware of why Karadzic had become so well known in the past five months.

"This is hardly as a poet," he says. "It is rather like getting Heinrich Himmler to discuss the merits of vegetarianism or Adolf Hitler to discuss the influence of German nationalism on his early

paintings. They both had other sides to their characters."

Double agents

PRESIDENT Yeltsin may be confident that his reforms will survive this week's unpleasantly close encounter with the Congress of People's Deputies. Others, however, are less sanguine.

Certainly there is little comfort to be gleaned from a recent interview with Vitaly Ignatenko, general director of Itar-Tass, the Russian news agency. In it Ignatenko makes clear what he thinks of allegations that Tass these days is largely staffed by former KGB men. Indeed he has issued a "statement of journalistic principle".

"Journalists must be full-time employees of the news agency and may not be full-time employees of the secret services. We have dispatched abroad some 60 new correspondents in the past year. I do not rule out that some may help the secret services on a voluntary basis and share information. But this is on a purely free-will basis. I am interested only in their work as correspondents." How reassuring.

Alcoholic decor

CHRISTIE'S may have started a new craze — antique wines, not for



SO WHAT should our political leaders read this Christmas? A straw poll of backbenchers by BBC2's *Scrutiny* programme has produced some interesting ideas. Sir Marcus Fox, left, chairman of the 1922 committee, suggests Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep* for John Smith; Peter Mandelson, centre, MP for Hartlepool, recommends Graham Greene's *A Burnt Offer Case* for Paddy Ashdown, while Sir David Steel, right, says Trollope's *Can you Forgive Her?* would suit the prime minister.

drinking but for decorating the cellar. The bottles came from a single cellar that the auction house sold yesterday for a total of £495,000 — the largest cellar Christie's had seen. Michael Broadbent, the Christie's director, says: "It's the first time we've done this. A few dozen very old bottles of claret, bur-

gundy and champagne had to be abandoned, the corks having failed but it seemed a pity to discard those wines and vintages of unusual interest and rarity whose levels were too low to guarantee drinkability but worth a risk."

Broadbent says there is a sporting chance the lucky dip wines

which include vintages from the 1850s will be drinkable. "If not they can always garnish the cellar," he says.

ONE person who remains unaffected by Christmas spirit — not surprisingly, perhaps, as he eschews Christianity in favour of pantheism — is the Marquess of Bath. Frightened by a rise in the theft of Christmas trees from Longleaze's 4,000 acres of forest, he has taken on a two-man all-night security team and a roving team, who is trained to pounce on anyone who looks like a Christmas tree thief. "I wouldn't describe her as a man-eater exactly," says head forester John McHardy, "more a last resort."





RANKING BY RESEARCH

The new league tables may be flawed, but are still worthwhile

Universities have never enjoyed scrutiny. William Emerson's 1856 account of English life noted wryly that Oxford, for all its virtues, knew "how to resist and make inoperative the terrors of parliamentary inquiry". Two months ago, the vice-chancellors reacted furiously to *The Times* university guide and yesterday there was much grumbling in common rooms about the research rankings published by the Universities Funding Council. The brisk breeze of glasnost is blowing through academe and is to be welcomed.

The new gradings, which for the first time include the former polytechnics, are a unique map of the nation's scholarship, assessing the work of 43,000 academics in 72 subject groups at more than 150 institutions. The stakes in the exercise are high. At the top of the scale are the handful of departments scoring 5 and therefore judged to have achieved international standards. At the bottom, those that scored 1 have been branded as unworthy of any research funding. These assessments will underpin the funding council's allocation of £650 million in February.

Harsh as this system is, it is better than the prejudices that have tended to govern perception of university performance. Few laymen would have expected, for example, that Birmingham and Birkbeck College, London, would be judged to have a stronger history department than Oxford, and both the ancient universities scored more 3s than they will feel content with.

Regular public assessment is the enemy of complacency and banishes myth. Yesterday's research rankings are part of a transformation of higher education based on accountability and market forces, tempered by a measure of central planning. As universities have expanded, their productivity has improved dramatically: since 1979, the staff-student ratio has risen from 1:9 to

1:13 and the funding council continues to offer cash bonuses to those institutions adventurous enough to take on undergraduates without full funding or to secure commercial capital for building projects.

The gradings show that universities are also concentrating their research resources on their academic strengths. Some took the gamble of entering only some of their departments for assessment. The new University of Westminster, for instance, achieved a public relations coup in its 5 for communications and media studies in this way. This is precisely the sort of risk that the new system is supposed to reward.

The danger, however, is that this sort of nuance will be lost on the public, who will undoubtedly use the rankings as an uncomplicated measure of excellence. Intellectual achievement is notoriously hard to calibrate and there is a risk that the rankings will tend to reward quantity of work rather than quality, thus diverting funds from the civilised contact with their peers and students that forms the basis of British university life.

The methods used by the 450 assessors, locked in little cabals, are still too opaque and it is worrying that there is as yet no mechanism for appeal against their judgments. But the greatest peril of the rankings is that they will slip into dull intellectual conformity, pressured by the abolition of tenure, the introduction of performance-related pay, and the brutal difference between a 3 and a 2.

It should make no difference to a department's fortunes that it supports Leavis or Ferrida, but there is a small risk that it will. The universities must take a lead in improving this essentially promising system from within — and remind the world that there is more to campus life than the dormish grind in the laboratory and the library.

ATROCITIES OF WAR

Evidence must be collected now of war crimes in Bosnia

The United States has been right to press the issue of war crimes as well as of war in the Balkans. The fighting in former Yugoslavia has been of the most public kind. Every report of an atrocity has to be investigated now with the aim of establishing individual penal responsibility.

War crimes trials should not be a substitute for other policy moves; hard talk cannot replace hard action. But the process of gathering evidence for a future trial has to begin now, while memories are still fresh.

There is already a war crimes commission reporting to the United Nations Security Council but it cannot hold trials. The UN should take the necessary steps to set up a tribunal. A sensible aim would be to prepare for a first trial for those leaders who bear the highest responsibility for the atrocities, just as Nuremberg concentrated on the major Nazi criminals at the first proceeding.

The full Nuremberg conditions — unconditional surrender, justice meted out by the victors — do not apply. For that reason, the naming by the US Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger of three men suspected of ordering war crimes was inopportune. One of those named, the Serbian president Slobodan Milosevic, may well be re-elected on Sunday. Another, Dr Radovan Karadzic, may remain as leader of the Bosnian Serbs. America may need to negotiate with these pariahs if they emerge more chastened than defeated.

There is need for urgency, however, both in collecting evidence and in setting up the appropriate legal structures. If President Milosevic is re-elected on Sunday, there is a

strong possibility that he will try to cement a deal with Croatia, ending the war in Bosnia but effectively dismembering the republic.

That would certainly muddy the waters. Prisoners will be exchanged, amnesty granted to suspected battlefield criminals and the line of command linking forward Serbian units to President Milosevic will become even more obscure. The Serbs, and to a lesser degree the Croats, can be expected to deny their crimes with the same cynicism that they have been perpetrating them.

Fortunately, there is now a well developed body of international law for dealing with war crimes. The Hague Conventions of 1907 and the 1929 Prisoner of War Convention did little to influence behaviour in the second world war. But the 1949 Geneva Conventions, which embodied some of the lessons from Hitler's war, are a much more refined instrument. The rules of war have never been more clearly defined.

Every Serb, Croat or Muslim commander should now be forced to think twice before engaging in combat in a civilian area. And "ethnic cleansing", that terrifying addition to the political lexicon, should be treated as a prima facie case of genocide.

Even if the trials can only be held in a few years' time, the crimes must be investigated now. The Serbian government has already said that it will not participate or help in such investigations. This should not deter Western lawyers or leaders. Neither the state of Serbia nor that of the rump Yugoslavia are being put in the dock; rather it is individuals, based on their political and military responsibility, who will be judged.

EXPLOSIONS AT BRITISH GAS

Ofgas was well within its rights to recommend a break-up

Earlier this year there were rumours that British Gas would propose a break-up of its constituent parts to pre-empt any such move being forced on it by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission (MMC). Stockbrokers happily started to calculate the added value such a demerger would bring and the extent to which the share price would soar. Yet now that Ofgas, the industry regulator, has suggested such a move to the MMC, it is criticised for being too heavy-handed and, worst of all, for betraying British Gas shareholders.

Some tension is healthy between a regulator and a privatised industry. Cosiness would be downright suspicious. But the animus that Sir James McKinnon, Ofgas's director-general, has inspired suggests that the hostility between his office and British Gas has become close to war. British Gas is convinced that Sir James is being unnecessarily aggressive; Sir James is convinced that the company needs a serious injection of competition. It was because the two could not reach agreement over the rate of return the company could earn on its pipeline business that the MMC was called in to adjudicate.

In these circumstances, it is helpful that the MMC has become a buffer between the warring parties. Contrary to some comment, Ofgas is not trying to legislate rather than regulate. The future of the gas industry is now in the hands of the MMC. All Sir James can do is put his view to the commission. When it reports, Michael Heseltine, president of the board of trade, will have to decide whether to enact its recommendations.

Since privatisation Sir James has fought

like a terrier on behalf of consumers to keep gas prices down and to force the company to deal fairly with the few competitors it has. But, as with many other privatised monopolies, there is a limit to the extent to which a regulator can replicate competition or encourage new companies to enter a market dominated by a giant. All the logic points to a break-up. It is right, though, that such a momentous step should be decided by government, advised by the MMC, and not by a regulator on its own.

The only moral difficulty arises over the shareholders, who were promised in the prospectus (rashly, as it turns out) that the structure of the company would remain unchanged. The dilemma is sharpened because the government deliberately encouraged unsophisticated, first-time shareholders — Sid and his friends — to take up the offer. Many of these people did not even realise that share ownership was more risky than investing in a building society account.

Yet the government must weigh the interests of consumers against those of shareholders. All shareholders are exposed to market risk — both changes in the stock market and in the market for their companies' goods. But in the case of a regulated monopoly, such changes have to come from above rather than below. That was always the risk of buying a privatisation share, and the government, in the interests of maximising its revenue, did not spell it out enough.

Mr Heseltine may anyway save his conscience. For if the analysts are right, a demerger could actually increase the price of British Gas shares. And if that happened, Sid would be as happy as Larry.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Arts in search of stronger support

From Mr George J. Levy

Sir, The Treasury is introducing the new principle of combining running costs with purchase grants for the funding of national museums and galleries (letters, December 2 and 10).

The trustees of these institutions will inevitably have to face the unenviable task of choosing between whether to repair the roof or to buy a masterpiece. The roof is bound to win, as the Treasury is only too well aware. So much for the value it attaches to the national heritage.

One of the most fruitful ways of looking after this is the system of accepting works of art in lieu of tax. Recently, however, the Treasury appears to be doing its best to undermine this provision by raising constant difficulties over such matters as valuation with the body responsible for administering it, the Museums and Galleries Commission. The consequence is that owners and their agents are discouraged from making offers under this civilised scheme.

It is not time that we heard the views of those most intimately concerned — museum trustees and the Commission?

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE J. LEVY
(Director,
H. Blairman & Sons Ltd,
119 Mount Street, W1,
December 15.

From Mr John Nickson and others

Sir, As was pointed out at the ABSA (Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts) awards ceremony last week (report, December 12), less corporate money is being given to the arts this year than last. This confirms our unanimous view that income from business sponsorship and corporate membership is falling, despite recent reports of continuing growth in business support for the arts, suggesting

that we are securely funded. The latest excellent sponsorship figures (£65 million) refer to 1991-2. Many of us have recorded increases of 100 per cent or more in private-sector giving during the past five years and this achievement has helped to keep the arts afloat in those years when public grants grew more slowly than the rate of inflation. However, the situation has changed dramatically in the current year.

Whilst business remains enthusiastic about the arts, economic circumstances are now inhibiting commercial sponsorship; the arts cannot be immune from recession. Nevertheless, we believe it should be a matter of public record that the arts are threatened on three fronts: box office is affected by lower discretionary spending; sponsorship is falling; and the government has announced reduced grants to the arts.

We shall continue to do all we can to stimulate private-sector support; but no one should underestimate the impact of reducing any aspect of the plural funding equation.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN NICKSON
(English National Opera),
GRISelda BEAR
(Royal Academy Trust),
MOIRA BENNETT
(London Symphony Orchestra),
FELICITY CLARK
(Royal Opera House Trust),
SUSAN DAVENPORT
(The Royal Shakespeare Company),
SALLY MASON
(Victoria & Albert Museum),
JOSE PHILLIPS
(London Philharmonic Orchestra),
RICHARD SHAW
(English National Ballet),
LUCY STOUT
(Royal National Theatre),
CLAIRE WHITAKER
(South Bank Centre),
London Coliseum,
St Martin's Lane, WC2.

Health and over-50s

From Mr Kevin Connolly

Sir, ARP Over 50 (Association of Retired Persons) applauds the call by Professor Grimley Evans (article, December 7) for tougher guidelines to prevent open-ended hospital stays from potentially life-saving treatment to the over-50s.

We are running a campaign against discrimination in the treatment of older people within the National Health Service, and we deplore the fact that, according to Professor Evans, a recent survey has shown that of the 175 coronary care units a fifth had age-related admission policies, and two-fifths had put age limits on who should have clot-busting drugs.

ARP Over 50 has more than 125,000 members and represents the social and economic needs of the 18 million people over 50 in the UK. We are holding the inaugural meeting of our Anti-Age Discrimination Group at the House of Commons on April 27, 1993, sponsored by Winston Churchill MP.

We have the support of more than 100 MPs and MEPs of all parties, including Angela Rumbold, Sir Teddy Taylor, Charles Kennedy, Glenda Jackson and David Blunkett.

Yours faithfully,
KEVIN CONNOLLY
(Director of Communications),
ARP Over 50,
Greenoat House,
Francis Street, SW1,
December 7.

Courts charter

From Mr Anthony Temple, QC

Sir, I have recently received a glossy 16-page "courts charter" from the Lord Chancellor's Department. Without explanation the two-and-a-half pages devoted to civil business refer only to the county court and ignore the higher civil courts. Presumably this is because the service now provided in the High Court — and especially the Commercial Court, in which delays and the absence of full-time judges are now scandalous — is acknowledged to be so poor that no standards can be advanced.

If there are to be standards in the higher civil courts they should have been expressed in the charter. The first should be a commitment by the government to the provision of sufficient full-time judges to give the public the quality service that it deserves.

Yours faithfully,
ANTHONY TEMPLE,
4 Pump Court, Temple, EC4,
December 4.

Du Maurier letters

From Ms Margaret Forster

Sir, It is time to call a halt to the latest spate of rumours about my forthcoming biography of Daphne du Maurier (report, December 14).

I wish to state that I have never, at any time, read or seen any letter written by Daphne du Maurier to Gertrude Lawrence or indeed by Gertrude Lawrence to Daphne du Maurier. If such letters exist I would of course be fascinated to examine them.

Yours sincerely,
MARGARET FORSTER,
c/o Chas & Windus,
20 Vandon Bridge Road, SW1.

Addresses in code

From Mr Peter Sutcliffe

Sir, Gone are the days when telephone books listed correct postal addresses.

Our 1992 local directory is prefaced by a letter from the self-styled Phone Book Manager, who tells us that postcodes are included by arrangement with the Post Office.

I could not find a single postcode entry, although our 1990 edition was full of them.

If the Royal Mail wants to make life easier it should press for all directories to include postcodes. The omission in our book looks like an unresolved dispute between BT and the Post Office.

Yours faithfully,
PETER SUTCLIFFE,
Roughlow Farm,
Willington,
Tarpoley,
Cheshire,
December 9.

Turn to page 32

From Miss Alison Elliott

Sir, Do most women feel the urge to throw away the sports pages? Lynne Truss (article, December 15) suggests that we do, and that we rush for alternative activity when the subject is announced on radio or television.

I would not say I was obsessed (except, perhaps, when it comes to cricket) but I am interested in many sports. Unlike Ms Truss, I do ensure that my hair-dryer never clashes with those vital three minutes on the Today programme at 7.25 or 8.25, and I looked forward enormously to last Sunday's review of the year's sporting activities on television.

Even as a non-voter, and with no particular knowledge of motor racing,

Counsel's role when clients plead

From Professor Michael Zander

Sir, Professor Michael McCorville and Mr Lee Bridges (letter, December 15) ask whether it is contrary to the ethics of the Bar to allow a client to plead guilty when he has reason to doubt the client's guilt and thinks the plea is being entered solely to take advantage of the sentence discount given for a guilty plea.

Their concern arises from a finding reported in my recent lecture on preliminary results of the Crown Court Survey conducted for the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice (report, December 9). We found that there were 53 cases in two weeks (representing something over 1,000 a year) in which the defence barrister said he had a concern that the client might have been an innocent person pleading guilty to get a sentence discount.

Closer inspection, however, shows that this statistic is probably not as worrying as it first appears.

In quite a number of these cases the defence barrister indicated that in his view the prosecution had strong, and in some cases overwhelming, evidence. In those cases the barrister was apparently dissociating himself from the client's claim of innocence. In some the barrister said he started out by thinking the client might have been innocent but eventually accepted that he was not.

Many of the defendants were claiming to be not guilty in relation to only one of several charges. At least 34 of the 53 had previous criminal records — in many cases very long ones.

The defendants responded to our questionnaire in only 14 of the 53 cases. But in 13 out of the 14 they expressed themselves well satisfied with the work done by the barristers.

Certainly there were cases in which the guilty plea was influenced by the sentence discount. Provided the defen-

dant is guilty, this is the whole point of the sentence discount. The fear of course is that some innocent persons may also be tempted to plead guilty because of it.

I doubt whether any but a tiny number of the 53 cases in the Royal Commission's study would qualify as even possible cases of wholly innocent defendants pleading guilty.

Yours,
MICHAEL ZANDER,
London School of Economics
and Political Science,
Houghton Street, WC2,
December 17.

From Mr Robert Rhodes, QC

Sir, Professor McCorville and his assistant, Mr Bridges, should have checked with the Bar Council before troubling your readers with the question of supposed breach of ethics by defence barristers who do not "prevent the entry of a guilty plea" where they "have doubt" about their client's guilt or do not withdraw from the case.

The position is set out clearly in the Bar's code of conduct:

Where a defendant tells his counsel that he did not commit the offence with which he is charged but nevertheless insists on pleading guilty to it for reasons of his own, counsel must continue to represent him, but only after he has advised what the consequences will be and that what can be submitted in mitigation can only be on the basis that the client is guilty.

In cases where a defendant insists on pleading guilty, despite any doubts his counsel may have as to his guilt, there is no "failure to comply with professional codes of ethics" for the Bar Council to investigate. On the contrary, it could be a breach of the code were counsel to withdraw from the case.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT RHODES,
2 Crown Office Row, Temple, EC4,
December 15.

Identification of babies

From Mrs S. A. Roberson

Sir, While Professor Bevan's ingenious idea of a thumbprint (letter, December 7) may reduce the chances of sending home a baby with the wrong parents, it does not overcome the fundamental problem of the separation of the baby from the evidence which identifies it.

The only sure means of identification is one which cannot be parted from the child except with considerable effort. For some years banks have used invisible materials, read by ultra-violet scanners, for identification on plastic cash cards. Tattoos on the soles of the feet, making use of similar materials, would not be visible unless required.

A name on one foot, and a number on the other, using an instrument which simultaneously feeds the information into a database, should be as near foolproof as one could hope for.

Yours sincerely,
SALLY ROBBERSON,
15 Heathfield Road,
Croydon, Surrey.

From Mrs B. J. Boissevain

Sir, My second child was born in March 1955 in a small nursing

home. There were approximately 12 beds, of which perhaps three or four were reserved for maternity cases.

In spite of the extreme unlikelihood of a mix-up, it was the custom, immediately after birth, to take the mother's thumbprint and the baby's footprint and stamp them on the same card, together with details of date, name, sex and birth weight. So this simple procedure, now being introduced at Dudley Road Hospital, Birmingham, is not new.

Incidentally, the card is a charming souvenir of the baby's arrival, and I still treasure mine.

Yours faithfully,
BARBARA J. BOISSEVAIN,
Kilnlands, Heath Drive,
Walton-on-the-Hill,
Tadworth, Surrey.

From Mr Roger Green

Sir, Can Professor Bevan answer two simple questions?

How can a baby's thumbprint prove who its mother is?

Why is the thumbprinting of babies being "actively pursued by the West Midlands police"?

Your rather mixed-up servant,
ROGER GREEN,
17 Rowland Close,
Wolvercote, Oxford.

Lotteries and EC

From the Director of the Advisory Forum on Gambling

Sir, Your leading article on the national lottery (December 11) implies that from January 1 Britain will be flooded by foreign lottery tickets because of the single market.

As confirmed at the Edinburgh summit, the single market does not cover gambling, as this is a matter reserved for individual governments, on the grounds of national morality and public policy. The European Commission has been told by virtually every member state that they have no wish to see gambling harmonised, and those which run national lotteries have been strongest in insisting that frontiers stay up to keep out their neighbours' lottery tickets.

In addition, if foreign lottery promoters attempt to distribute tickets in Britain, the Home Office makes representations to the governments of the countries in question, and seizes and destroys the promotional material.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD FAULKNER, Director,
The Advisory Forum on Gambling,
7 Buckingham Gate, SW1.

French predicament

From Mr L. P. Bayley

Sir, I have enormous sympathy for the French, in their predicament, which has resulted from the Gatt agreement. French rural society was remarkably little affected by the consequences of the Industrial Revolution until well after the second world war.

The change came with calamitous suddenness and has resulted in the virtual abandonment of hundreds of villages all over France, and the arrival in the cities of a whole generation of men and women whose youth was spent and whose roots remain deep in a provincial world in many ways unchanged for a century or more, one might almost say since the French Revolution.

It says a great deal for French courage and resilience that they have handled this traumatic development so well. The protesting farmers must lose, and they know it. Recent demonstrations at Strasbourg and elsewhere are in reality no more than a lament for the passing of an ancient and precious element of our European history.

Yours faithfully,
L. P. BAYLEY,
79a Gloucester Street, Winchester,
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire.

Dates in mind

From Mr Michael Webber

Sir, Can I be the only person in England who neither knows, nor cares, what he was doing when he heard that President Kennedy or John Lennon had been murdered (report, December 16)? On the other hand, I do remember where I was when I heard of the deaths of "Fats" Waller in 1943 (buying *Melody Maker* in the Market Square, Northampton) and George VI in 1952 (on a bus in Tottenham Court Road). Just different priorities, I suppose.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL WEBBER,
19 Netherhall Gardens, NW3.

Sports letters, page 32
Business letters, page 23

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 071-782 5046.

Action against Serbia must be balanced by warnings that Croatia and the Bosnian Muslims can expect similar treatment from the United Nations if they exploit the pressure exerted on Serbia.

- *The European*

- The European



BUSINESS 19-24

British stores struggle in the land of opportunity



ARTS 27-29

Thames TV's This Week bows out after 36 years



SPORT 32-36

Decade of success predicted for England rugby

MOTORING
ON
FRIDAY
Page 30

THE TIMES

2

FRIDAY DECEMBER 18 1992

BUSINESS TODAY

WATERSHED



Privatised water companies have been told future price increases will be based on the level of services to customers
Page 21

ORDERS SWELL

Manufacturers are feeling the benefits of devaluation, with order books at their highest level for five months
Page 21

LIQUID ASSET



Merrydown Wine is buying the Schloer and PJL fruit juice brands from SmithKline Beecham
Page 21

TOMORROW



After 15 years, Sir Jeremy Moore is sorry to be stepping down as chairman of Lloyd's Bank despite misgivings about trends in the industry

THE POUND

US dollar 1.5805 (+0.0015)
German mark 2.4585 (+0.0044)
Exchange index 80.7 (+0.2)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share 2092.5 (+10.9)
FT-SE 100 2740.3 (+7.5)
New York Dow Jones 3257.08 (+1.90)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 17437.91 (+169.20)

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base: 7%
3-month interbank: 7 1/4-7 3/4%
3-month eligible bills: 6 1/4-6 3/4%
US: Prime rate: 6%
Federal Funds: 2 1/4%
3-month Treasury bills: 3.20-3.19%
30-year bonds: 102 1/2-102 3/4%

CURRENCIES

London: New York
£: \$1.5755
DM: £1.5730
DM: £1.5624
SFR: £1.4030
FF: £1.4010
Yen: £1.2315
Index: 80.7
Ecu: £0.798329
Sdr: £0.898328
Ecu: £1.25772
Sdr: £1.125712
London Forex market close

GOLD

London Fixing: AM \$307.75 PM \$338.65
Close \$338.00-338.50
2214.25-214.75
New York: COMEX \$ 338.35-338.65

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Jan) ... \$18.20/bbl (\$18.05)

RETAIL PRICES

RPI: 139.7 November (1987=100)
* Denotes midday trading price

Barclays sets aside £1 1/4 bn

Record single provision may send bank into loss

BY NEIL BENNETT
BANKING
CORRESPONDENT

BARCLAYS has set aside £240 million against its loans to Imry, the private property group, the largest single bad debt provision made by a British bank.

The bank said it is writing off £196 million of the loan completely because it is dismantling Chester Holdings. Imry's highly geared parent company. The provisions are part of a last-ditch refinancing to allow Imry to continue trading in the hope that the bank may recover some of its funds when the property market improves.

The provision is higher than expected and confirmed City analysts' fears that Barclays is heading for a loss this year and may cut its dividend. The bank made £75 million of the provision in its first-half figures but most of the charge will hit the second half.

The provision is almost five times higher than the bank's profits of £51 million in the first half and will push its bad debt provisions close to a record £2.5 billion this year.

The provision is a severe embarrassment to Andrew Buxton, Barclays' chairman-elect, who as managing director in 1989 played a key role in agreeing the loans to Imry. As part of the restructuring, Barclays is taking 100 per cent of the shares in Imry and two of the bank's senior executives will have complete control of the company through a trust.

The bank is converting another £100 million of its loans into preference shares in the company, which leaves remaining loans of £76 million and unused facilities of £50 million.

Barclays has brought back David Davies, Imry's former chairman, to run the company, alongside Martin My-

■ Almost £4 billion has been set aside by Barclays against lending to the private property group Imry. The provision, largest on a single loan, may push the bank into loss

ers, the existing chief executive. The management are being given preference shares that can convert into a substantial stake depending on the company's performance.

Imry is being left with debts of £226 million, and net assets of £70 million. Its main asset is the 500,000 sq ft Shires Shopping Centre in Leicester, which opened a year ago and is fully let.

The bank decided to keep Imry alive at any cost because it is worried that the collapse of any more property companies will depress the market even



further and create more bad debts. The bank also believes Imry's existing management will be able to handle the assets better than a receiver.

Barclays' relationship with Imry began when it financed the highly leveraged £314 million offer for Imry Merchant Investors, then a public company. The bid was made by Markinchief, a vehicle later owned by Wolfgang Stolzenberg, a Canadian. Mr Stolzenberg resigned from the company last month.

Barclays agreed to lend Markinchief £215 million.

The loan was agreed by a credit panel of senior executives and approved by the board. The bank said yesterday that Mr Buxton as managing director was "kept fully informed" while the loan was being arranged. Mr Buxton would have also been at the board meetings where the loan, one of the bank's largest, was discussed. Barclays is almost the sole lender to Imry, although a small debenture is held by Norwich Union.

Imry began to suffer as soon as the property market started to go into recession. Barclays refinanced the company last year, but the fall in property values means the company could not service the debts owed by Markinchief, later renamed Chester. Under the refinancing, Chester is becoming a shell company and Imry Holdings, its only asset, is being transferred to Imry Group, a new company owned by Barclays.

Mr Myers said the refinancing gave the company a chance to make the most of its properties. "If we had remained a public company we would still be viable. We are not under one iota of pressure to sell our properties and we now want our assets to grow."

Meanwhile Moody's, the debt rating agency, has cut its rating for Barclays to A2 from A+1. The agency blamed the weakness of the bank's assets and profitability and pressure on the bank's capital. Only last year Barclays was still one of the few banks with an AAA rating, the highest.

Stock market, page 22
Comment, page 23



Embarrassed: chairman-elect Andrew Buxton played a key role in making the loan

Breakup could cut gas prices

BY ROSS TIEMAN
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

GAS prices could be cut further and shareholders' returns enhanced if British Gas were broken up, Sir James McKinnon, the head of Ofgas, said yesterday.

His prediction came amid a growing realisation that there will be heavy job losses and a far-reaching re-organisation of British Gas whatever the outcome of the current monopolies commission enquiry.

British Gas has already commissioned a consultants report into how best to pare down its 2,000 head office staff in London. It has more than 80,000 employees, and is under intense pressure to cut costs in line with regulatory pressure for lower prices.

Sir James is convinced that the benefits of a breakup would be widespread. "I think generally speaking there is a good chance that if you break up a company the value that you can maximise is greater than the value of the whole when you start," he said.

With customers already likely to lend their backing, Sir James launched an appeal for shareholder support as he stepped up his campaign to destroy the monopoly enjoyed by British Gas in the interests of greater competition.

City analysts were sceptical that Sir James would succeed in his breakup bid, arguing that the group would fight tooth and nail to retain the link between gas exploration, production and distribution.

Earlier, in a report to the monopolies commission, Ofgas argued that only by separating British Gas's transmission business, equal to 80 per cent of the £11.4 billion company, from the arm that sells gas to customers, could fair competition be guaranteed.

Sid's concern, page 5
Leading article, page 15
Six-year gas war, page 21

BA wins approval for bid to take 25% Qantas stake

BY COLIN NARBROUGH, WORLD TRADE CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH Airways has beaten off a rival bid from Singapore Airlines to secure a 25 per cent stake in Qantas, the Australian national carrier, for A\$665 million (£292 million).

The Australian government, which plans to privatise the rest of Qantas by June 30, yesterday gave BA the green light to buy into the airline, only a week after sealed bids were lodged for the minority stake. The 25 per cent interest is the maximum allowed a non-Australian holder.

The Qantas stake will boost BA's presence in Asia-Pacific region. Qantas, which has a fleet of 83 aircraft, made a profit of A\$137.3 million in the year to June.

Welcoming the Australian decision, Lord King, the BA chairman, said it marked the beginning of a "permanent

alliance" which would see both BA and Qantas well positioned to face the challenges of the market into the next century. "It is an alliance which will create opportunities for competitive growth and expansion on a level previously unavailable to either airline," Lord King said.

Ralph Willis, Australia's finance minister, said BA was preferred over Singapore Airlines, which had only sought 20 per cent stake, on both price and conditions. He said BA and Canberra had agreed a recapitalisation for Qantas of A\$1.35 billion. Current debt stands at A\$6.4 billion. The remaining 75 per cent of Qantas will be floated next year.

Qantas merged in September with Australian Airlines, the loss-making domestic car-

rier. BA said it had the cash and borrowing facilities to finance the Qantas deal, formal agreement of which could come before Christmas.

In Washington, at the weekend, John Major is hoping to press the Bush administration to clear the way to a BA-USair deal despite signals that it is ready to turn down the deal. Andrew Card, the American transportation secretary, is due to deliver his verdict on the proposed tie-up, which would give BA a 44 per cent stake, by December 24.

USair, the fourth largest American airline, has postponed a special shareholders meeting, originally scheduled for December 18, until December 24 because of the lack of a response from Mr Card.

City diary, page 23

Payouts flow most strongly at Yorkshire

BY PATRICIA TIEMAN

YORKSHIRE yesterday ended the regional electricity company reporting season with a 28 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £42.5 million in the six months to end-September.

Shareholders have been awarded a 6p interim dividend, up 14.7 per cent, the highest increase of all 12 regional supply companies.

Customers will also benefit, with a £13 million rebate, worth £5 off the standing charge for its 2 million customers on published tariffs.

John Tysoe, Yorkshire's chairman, made it clear he is unwilling to sign a new five-year contract for coal-fired power from the generators until the uncertainties surrounding the government's energy review are cleared up.

Temps, page 20

A gleam in Clinton's back yard

FROM PHILIP ROBINSON
IN NEW YORK

RTZ, the UK mining giant, reckons it has discovered the world's largest diamond-bearing rock formation - in Bill Clinton's back yard.

The find has been made at the Crater of Diamonds State Park, near Murfreesboro in Arkansas, where Mr Clinton was governor until recently. Under him, a four-company consortium led by Kennecott Exploration, a member of the RTZ group, gained permission to excavate the 887-acre park for diamonds.

The find has sparked sharp controversy. Arkansas has to decide whether it will preserve the park for recreation, or yield to lucrative temptation. The state motto is the Land of



Opportunity. Kennecott said yesterday: "This is very sensitive at the moment; no one here wants to talk about it."

Previous prospectors have had mixed success. The first diamond was found on the site in 1906, but attempts at commercial mining between

then and 1952 were crippled by law suits, corporate bankruptcy and mysterious fires.

The park has been a playground for amateurs since the state bought it in 1972 for a mere \$750,000. For \$3.50 admission, weekenders can take their picks and shovels to a 35-acre portion of the park and try their luck.

Greg Butts, director of Arkansas State Parks, said: "We plough it up every so often and they see what they can find." Some have been handsomely rewarded. The Uncle Sam (40.23 carats) is the largest find, but stones named the Star of Murfreesboro (34.25 carats) and the Star of Arkansas (15.33 carats) have turned up among the 70,000 diamonds found there over two decades. Since the early 1980s

major mining companies have bagged the state. Governor Clinton set up a task force in 1986 and RTZ's excavation started in November 1989.

The consortium says samples from 26 holes drilled to 670 ft indicate there is 78 million tons of diamond-bearing rock sufficient for 30 years of mining. It is now arguing for permission to go ahead with further tests to determine quality, which could bring commercial mining to one of Arkansas's largest parks.

The locals have until April to put their case. They say success for RTZ would dull their chances of accidental wealth. A commercial mine would exclude the public from the main diamond-bearing "pipe".

THE CLASS DIFFERENCE

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Electra Trust assets decline

By Neil Bennett
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

THE desperate struggle for survival among Britain's smaller companies has hit the value of *Electra Investment Trust*, the venture capital specialist. The group's net assets per shares fell 15 per cent in the year to end-September.

The group was knocked by the recent collapse of Harland Simon, the control systems group, where it had a substantial investment. Overall, the value of the group's listed investments plunged by a fifth to £139 million. The value of unlisted investments remained little changed at £334 million, a fall in asset values in America compensated for the fall in Britain and a series of provisions.

Michael Stoddart, Electra's chairman, said it had been a difficult year for all small and medium-sized companies, particularly leveraged ones. He said the trust had made a series of provisions against ailing companies during the year, which would be detailed in its annual report.

Despite the fall in assets, the trust increased its final dividend 6 per cent to 3.4p, to make 6.7p for the year, up from 6.4p. Electra's pre-tax profits rose 7 per cent to £16.7 million as income from its investment remained steady.

Mr Stoddart said that the investment climate had improved recently and the trust was looking at a series of proposals. "Our area has been traumatic and difficult but we can look forward with a degree of optimism that we have not seen for a while," he said.

	Bid	Offer	+/-	Yld %
ABREY UNIT TRUST MANAGERS				
80 Hellenhurst Rd, Bournemouth BH8 8AL				
0345 717873				
Mastertrust	97.10	100.50	+ 0.30	1.81
International	71.57	76.07	+ 0.25	1.34

Yorkshire offers power of promise



Predator on their minds: Michael Cannon, left, and John Clark, of Devenish

THE fact that Yorkshire, the last of the regional electricity companies to report its half-way figures, has awarded shareholders the highest dividend increase, up 14.7 per cent to 6p, is hardly a coincidence.

Yorkshire is a good example of what an electricity supply company can achieve by sticking to what it knows best. It has diversified — it is, for example, the only regional company to take a majority stake in a gas-fired power generator — but the cost of diversifications is low and they look likely to pay off in the long run.

The Brigg combined cycle gas-turbine power station, in which Yorkshire holds 75 per cent and Total Gas Marketing is the other shareholder, should provide a strong earnings stream when it comes into operation in early 1994.

The regional companies' biggest problem is in differentiating themselves from one another in the eyes of the City. *They all depend on the distribution of electricity for their profits, which means the only way to choose between them is by looking at how they manage their businesses.*

Yorkshire is well managed: its operating costs were reduced 2 per cent in real terms in the first half, helped by a fall of 150 in staff numbers. More jobs will go over the next few years.

The recession has not hit Yorkshire as hard as some of the other regional companies. It has a generous dividend policy and, along with Manweb, looks a safe haven for investors.

For anyone keener to take a chance ahead of the government's energy review, South-

	Bid	Offer	1/4	Yld	%
CAPEL-CURE MYERS UNIT TRUST					
MANAGERS LTD					
5 Fountain Street, Manchester M2 2AF.					
Enquiries: 061 236 5089.					
Trading: 061 236 5362					
Swansea, Trans					

Gestetner

GESTETNER shares have underperformed the market since Ricoh, the Japanese company, took a 24.2 per cent stake in September last year, despite a recent swirl of bid speculation. Basil Sellers, the chairman, offers no comment on these. The ordinary shares managed a 4p rise to 154p

yesterday, after a better than expected 21.4 per cent jump in pre-tax profits to £27.2 million for the year to October 31. Lower costs helped, as did Latin American and Asian growth. The total dividend was maintained at 8.2p, although the stamp imposed

Although the cover improved a little as earnings rose from 11.6p to 12.1p.

About 25 per cent of Gestetner's fully diluted capital is held by Chiltern, which, in turn, is 20 per cent owned by Mr Sellers. Chiltern is an Australian company run from Monaco but is likely to switch domicile to Bermuda.

Since 95 per cent of its sales are now overseas, Gestetner.

too, would like to change domicile but feels locked into Britain by the capital gains tax it would have to pay on

Because of the company's year end, Gestetner's profits benefited hardly at all from devaluation. There was a 12 per cent rise in gearing to 36 per cent, entirely attributable to the pound's impact on overseas debts. In the present year, Gestetner expects a boost to profits from the pound's fall. America seems to be turning round, Canada continues to be tough, and Europe will remain flat.

Some analysts want to see how the world economy fares

Devenish

FULL-YEAR figures from JA Devenish have a strong air of the defence document about them. Boddington retains a 19.8 per cent stake after last year's failed bid, despite opportunities to exit at a profit. This has, understandably, never been far from the minds of the directors, led by Michael Cannon, chairman, and John Clark, chief executive.

The clearest signal is the 25.6 per cent rise in the total dividend, even if this does reduce cover to 2.2 times earnings. Devenish has a third of its pubs in Cornwall and the poor showing of the county's holiday industry meant the year's figures looked flat at the operating level, despite a 40 per cent increase in the size of the estate.

These add-ons will wait until the summer season and the second half of the current year to prove their full worth. Pre-tax profits in the £15 million area are in prospect, against a reported £13.6 million. The shares, therefore, are on a forward earnings multiple of about 12.7, which would appear to contain little bid premium.

The shares should be purchased only by those confident that Boddingtons will return to the fray, but existing investors should stay put.

BUSINESS FOUND-UP

Commercial Union cuts life and pension bonuses

COMMERCIAL Union kicked off this year's round of bonus declarations yesterday with a half per cent cut across the board on traditional life and pensions policies for policies maturing after January 1. Bonuses on traditional with-profits life policies have been cut from 7 per cent of sum assured and existing bonuses to 6.5 per cent. With-profits pensions have had their rates cut from 7.5 per cent to 7 per cent.

Rates on unisex with-profits life contracts will be cut from 9.5 per cent to 8.5 per cent while the total return on unisex with-profits pensions will be cut from 12.5 per cent to 10.5 per cent. Someone putting £30 a month into a 25-year endowment policy that matures next year will receive a payout of £62,941, down from last year's £65,596. The same person with a ten-year policy will have a payout of £7,164 down from £7,484.

LBMS back in black

LEARMONTH & Burchen Management Systems (LBMS) the USM-quoted computer company, reported a pre-tax profit of £753,000 (£281,000 loss) in the six months to end October. Turnover rose to £10.7 million (£10.1 million). Earnings per share were 3.1p (1.7p loss). There is no interim dividend (nil) but the company hopes to pay a final. Overseas sales now account for 40 per cent of the total compared with 30 per cent last year. The shares rose 9p to 129p.

Bromsgrove advances

BROMSGROVE Industries, the Birmingham specialises engineering group, increased pre-tax profits 25 per cent to £5 million (£3.2 million) in the six months to September 30. Turnover rose to £54 million (£39.4 million). Fully diluted earnings per share were 4.07p (5.41p) and there is an interim dividend of 1.65p (1.5p). Operating profits of £5.2 million (£4.3 million) were struck after charging £337,000 in redundancy and related costs.

First Technology leaps

FIRST Technology, a maker of crash dummies, is continuing a strong recovery. Profits leapt from £83,000 to £807,000 in the six months to October 31. The company promised a payout at the year end, its first for two years, provided trading continued to improve. Fred Westlake, chairman, said FIRST Technology was concentrating on its automotive safety business. This had led to a 29 per cent fall in sales, to £11.4 million, but demand from car manufacturers was steady.

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

[illegible]

Merrydown swallows SB soft drink brands

By MARTIN WALLER

MERRYDOWN Wine has made a long-awaited expansion in the soft drinks line. The cider producer has bought the Shloer apple juice and PLJ lemon juice brands from SmithKline Beecham, for a total of £8.26 million.

Merrydown is raising £5.06 million through a placing to meet the initial payment on completion of £4.35 million and provide extra working capital. The shares will be offered back to existing shareholders on a one-for-three basis.

The deal was greeted by the market with a 23p jump in Merrydown shares to 248p. Shloer is seen in the drinks industry as a brand in decline, and warranted sales of £6 million in 1992 would be £600,000 down on the previous year. Richard Purdey, Merrydown's chairman, said Merrydown was confident that there was "considerable scope for the growth and development" of the brand

and that the sales decline could be reversed.

His first task will be to combat the strong seasonality of the brand — 40 per cent of sales fall in November and December. Shloer may therefore be promoted as a summer drink too. PLJ annual sales are less than £1 million.

Both drinks will be produced mainly at Merrydown's facilities at Horam, East Sussex, and distributed through the same network as the company's other products, which include two soft drinks brands.

SmithKline Beecham, which bought Shloer in the 1950s, is selling the pair to concentrate on its larger health drinks brands.

Merrydown is to graduate from the USM to a full stock market listing.

Mr Purdey said the company's policy is based on its position at the premium end of the cider market and on further growth in soft drinks.



A drop of the soft stuff: Richard Purdey, chairman, left, and Michael O'Driscoll, finance director, are planning further growth of Merrydown's soft drinks side

Devaluation helps boost factory order books

By JANET BUSH
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S manufacturers are beginning to see some of the benefits of sterling's devaluation, a competitive advantage increasingly envied by those European countries facing recession and rising unemployment but lacking the tools to tackle this because they belong to the exchange-rate mechanism.

The Confederation of British Industry reported in its December monthly trends survey today that British manufacturers' order books were at their best levels for five months, although still well below normal levels. Export orders seem to have improved in December, following the deterioration in October and November, which the CBI attributed partly to sterling's

■ Central banks continued to battle in currency markets as the ERM came under pressure despite France's renewed commitment to a strong franc

devaluation since September. Manufacturers seem to be becoming more optimistic about output, with a smaller proportion of firms predicting a decline in volume of output over the next four months.

While the Treasury expressed disappointment that unemployment is rising sharply, a spokesman said the evidence from manufacturing industry was generally encouraging. He said improved output expectations should continue as the effect of lower base rates continues to feed through.

Sterling profited from being outside the ERM, where ten-

sions remained acute yesterday. The pound closed a touch higher at DM2.4575.

European central banks continued to battle with the currency markets as they speculated that the commitment to current parities in the system cannot last, given Europe's growing economic problems.

Pierre Bérégovoy, the French prime minister, took the unusual step of holding a press conference to reaffirm his government's commitment to maintaining a strong franc. He said he would not devalue or float the currency. This was backed up by

intervention from the Bank of France and the Bundesbank. Despite this, the franc closed little changed from its previous finish at 3.4170 to the mark. A major source of pressure for the franc is the increasing unpopularity of the government's franc fort policy.

Opposition leaders say they would float or devalue to be able to cut interest rates and reignite the economy. The government's economic research institute predicted that French unemployment would average 10.8 per cent in the first half of 1993. But despite economic weakness, short-term interest rates have risen to 11 per cent because of the franc's vulnerability.

The US had more good news yesterday with the trade deficit falling 18 per cent in October to \$7.03 billion from \$8.58 billion in September.

Devenish profits pull ahead

JA DEVENISH, the West Country public house operator widely seen as under takeover threat from Boddington Group, saw pre-tax profits rise £2 million to £13.6 million in the year to the end of September. This was despite little change in earnings from its core pub business (Martin Waller writes).

The improvement came from lower interest charges and non-recurrence of losses from discontinued businesses. A 6.35p final dividend makes a total of 7.85p (6.25p).

John Clark, chief executive, said the board was pleased with the pub's performance in a difficult year for the drinks industry in the West Country. The sharp increase in the dividend was merely the level of payment catching up from its original low base to where it should be, he added.

Times, page 20

GA chiefs quit Royal Bank to avoid conflict of interest

By NEIL BENNETT, BANKING CORRESPONDENT

THE Royal Bank of Scotland has accepted the resignations of the chairman and one of the directors of General Accident from its board after it became known that they could learn competitive secrets about Direct Line, the bank's fast-growing motor and home insurer.

Lord Airlie, the chairman of General Accident, and Ronald Noel-Paton, the managing director of John Menzies and a General Accident director, yesterday said they will retire from the board of the Royal Bank after its annual meeting next month. In their place, the bank has appointed Iain Vallance, the chairman of BT, as a non-executive director.

Jimmy James, a director of Sun Alliance, is also stepping down at the bank's next board meeting.

Officially, the bank said

yesterday that the two GA men had decided to retire because they felt there may be a conflict of interest due to the headlong expansion of Direct Line. Lord Younger of Prestwick, the chairman, said yesterday: "Both my colleagues and I have learned with regret of their decision to retire and we would like to thank them for their loyal service and sound advice over the years."

Privately, however, Royal Bank's executives are extremely relieved that they are leaving, since the traditional composite insurers are concerned about the growth of Direct Line, which sells insurance over the telephone, and are keen to compete more fiercely with it.

Peter Wood, the head of Direct Line and Britain's highest-paid employee, has never revealed the most de-

tailed statistics about Direct Line's success at the full board meetings, and has only given them out in executive reviews. The three men had also agreed not to attend some Direct Line presentations.

Direct Line has grown from nothing in seven years and has \$76,000 policyholders. The company's success showed in Royal Bank's figures. The insurer's profits rose 50 per cent to £15.1 million even after Mr Wood's £6 million bonus. Premiums rose 71 per cent to £213 million and the bank expects the company to become a market leader by the middle of the decade.

Lord Younger said he was delighted that Mr Vallance had agreed to join the board. "His background and experience will bring considerable benefit to our discussions at board level," he added.

Insurer bids £44m for trust stake

Ecclesiastical Insurance Office, the insurance group wholly owned by Allchurches Trust, a registered charity, is offering £44.1 million cash for the 60 per cent of St Andrew Trust it does not already own.

The offer values each St Andrew share at about 215p and puts the trust's share capital at £74 million. The shares closed at 211p. The bid is seen as a housekeeping exercise to allow EIO to win more than 50 per cent of St Andrews. Under EC rules, this will allow it to treat the value of its holding at net asset value rather than according to the share price.

Greenlees falls

The competitive times in the British advertising industry are reflected in a 27 per cent fall in pre-tax profits at Gold Greenlees Trotter. Profits dropped to £2.17 million in the six months to end-October, although some of the decline is accounted for by the non-repetition of a £482,000 profit last time from a disposal. The interim dividend stays at 3.3p.

Payout raised

Profits at Acasos & Huncheson, the supplier of edible oils, rose from £6.7 million before tax to £7.56 million in the year to September 27. Earnings advanced to 15.2p (13.3p) a share and the final dividend is 4p (3.25p) making 6.5p for the year (5p).

Water regulator reports an improvement in services

By GEORGE SYVELL

BRITAIN'S 32 water companies have, overall, improved services to customers, says Ian Byatt, director-general of Ofwat, the water industry regulator. In his annual report on service in England and Wales, he reminds the companies that service since 1989 will be taken into account when price limits are reset in 1994.

Mr Byatt said: "With water charges increasing in real terms to finance improvements in services, customers

will want to see that higher bills do indeed reflect higher levels of service."

He criticised the information supplied by the companies. "Overall, the quality of information has improved. But while it is recognised that the development of satisfactory information systems takes time, the fact is that some companies have made significant progress while others have not. In addition, some companies have expressed concern that others are not

RICHARD POOLE

playing by the rules." Ofwat says the number of people affected by restrictions on water use fell from 21 million in 1991 to 6.7 million in 1992. Fewer customers experienced interruptions of more than a 12 hours to their supply and response times to customer complaints and billing queries have improved.

On response to written queries, Severn Trent, Teesside, South West, Folkestone and Dover, Mid Kent, South East Water, Mid Southern, Thames, Welsh, Bournemouth and Bristol rated as very poor.

On response to billing queries, Severn Trent, South West, South East, Bournemouth and Bristol were rated as very poor.

Severn Trent claimed yesterday that it had dramatically improved its responses on billing queries and written complaints since March when the report was compiled.

El Wessex Water, led by Nicholas Hood, chairman, and Colin Skelett, managing director, declared an 11.3 per cent increase in profits, to £44.3 million, in the six months to September 30. The dividend has been raised 10.6 per cent to 7.3p, out of earnings up 12.1 per cent to 40.6p. Mr Hood said costs did not increase over last time. Wessex shares rose 7p to 584p.



Wessex chiefs report profit flow: Hood, left, and Skelett

Full-frontal assault in six-year gas war

By ROSS TIERMAN
INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

FACING Sir James McKinnon, the head of Ofgas, across a lunch table at the Goring Hotel in London yesterday, Cedric Brown, British Gas's chief executive, must have wondered whether he was wasting his time.

Less than 24 hours earlier, Sir James had, without warning, launched the most devastating assault in his six-year campaign to destroy British Gas's monopoly. In a submission to the monopolies commission enquiry into the gas market, the 63-year-old head of Ofgas had called for British Gas to be broken up. It was, he said, the only way to effective competition in gas supply, and to end the war between company and regulator.

Mr Brown is much keener than his tormentor for hostilities to cease. When he stepped up from the role of managing director to become chief executive at British Gas on August 1, Mr Brown took

the toughest business decision of his life. Acknowledging that planning the future of the £11.4 billion company had become impossible under Sir James's constant assaults, he and his fellow directors chose to submit to a monopolies commission enquiry.

It was a gamble utterly at odds with the steady, thorough, but unexciting style of British Gas's management. British Gas is a company run largely by engineers. Capable, can-do people, proud of their success in creating the biggest integrated gas company in the world.

Yet this company of 84,000 employees has been driven to throw its future into the melting pot by a single-minded, white-haired Scot with a head for figures and a staff of fewer than 20 people.

This extraordinary saga began in August 1986, when ministers lit on Sir James, the former finance director of Imperial Group and appointed him to regulate the gas monopoly, which was privatised at the end of that year. Sir

Denis Rooke, the company's then chairman, had seen off attempts by the government and its advisers to break the company up ahead of sale. With hindsight, that appears a mistake.

Tenaciously and skillfully, and making maximum use of publicity, Sir James has levered British Gas into opening its markets to rivals. At every turn, the company has appeared outsmarted by its regulator. The elevation of Mr Brown reflected recognition that, for all his strengths, Robert Evans, the chairman, lacks the sparkle to match Sir James.

Yesterday's lunch, in an hotel notable for wide spaces between tables to facilitate private discussion, was supposed to be about building bridges. But Sir James, with only two years of his tenure to run, seems determined that his legacy will be a fully competitive gas market.

Sir's concern, page 5
Leading article, page 15

INTERNATIONAL APPOINTMENTS



International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
Kathmandu

In preparation for the retirement of the second Director General, Dr. E. F. Tacke the Board of Governors invites applications for the post of

DIRECTOR GENERAL

Qualifications should include:

- A distinguished career of professional achievement in any of the disciplines relevant to the practice and promotion of integrated mountain development.
- Major practical and research experience with integrated sustainable development and environmental management in mountain areas of developing countries, preferably in the Hindu Kush-Himalayan Region.
- An established record of institutional management at the highest level, and of the leadership and motivation of a multi-disciplinary and international staff of senior scientists and professionals; experience in inter-institutional networking and an ability to attract funding.

Substantial experience of high-level executive positions in relevant international institutions would be particularly appreciated. Candidates may be male or female, preferably of an age between 45-55 years, and of any nationality. The working language of the Centre is English.

ICIMOD is an autonomous international organisation with its Headquarters in the Kingdom of Nepal, with the primary objective of promoting the sustainable well-being of mountain communities. It operates at the interface between applied, adaptive and development research, training and extension, emphasizing effective socio-economic development policies and programmes, and the sound management of fragile mountain habitats.

The Centre currently has an international professional staff of 19 and an annual budget exceeding US \$3.1 million. The Centre's publications and programmes may be obtained directly from ICIMOD, P.O. Box 3226, Kathmandu, Nepal.

The appointment of the new Director General of ICIMOD will be for a term of four years and should start not later than 1 March 1994. The salary and allowances of this exceptionally challenging post will be commensurate with the high qualifications and experience required, comparable to equivalent top-ranking positions in International Organisations.

Further details can be obtained from the address below, where applications with full CV and the names and addresses and telephone/facsimile numbers of three references should be received not later than 15 March 1993.

Prof. dr.ir. K.J. Beek
International Institute for Aerospace Survey and Earth Sciences (ITC)
350 Boulevard 1945, P.O. Box 6
7500 AA Enschede, The Netherlands

Fax: 31-53-87 44 00 Tel: 31-53-87 44 44

ADMINISTRATOR

ANNUAL CHARTER IN TUNISIA

Founded in 1923, the Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad, fundraises in Britain to work in North Africa and Jordan. It is now one of the leading animal charities and particularly committed to education.

This new post, based in Tunisia and answering to the local Director, will be a demanding challenge for the successful applicant, requiring the highest level of administrative skills, tact and diplomacy.

He/She will be responsible for the administration of seven animal clinics including the new Hospital Hotel. This will involve office management, basic accounting, supervision of the building fabric and vehicle fleet, ordering stock, and liaising with local government and ministers, and SPANA London. He/She will have to:

- ★ Good French
- ★ Money, energetic
- ★ Some knowledge of accounting procedures
- ★ An interest and concern for animals
- ★ A sympathy for the people of North Africa
- ★ Above all, a high level of tact and diplomacy

MARKETING MANAGEMENT

A team of overseas consultants dealing with Asian Commodity Futures Markets will be in London looking to recruit marketing management personnel.

If you want to be part of a dynamic international team of consultants and be prepared to relocate overseas there will be three introductory seminars to be held at:

Venue: Waldorf Hotel, London
Date: 4th, 8th & 8th January
Time: 14:00 - 16:00

Training will be in Hong Kong with the opportunity to be part of an expansion programme into China and the Pacific Rim.

Please send a CV and letter stating which seminar you will be attending to:

Mark Eddy
C/O Waldorf Hotel
The Aldwych
London WC2B 4UD

COMMENT

Hard heads beat bleeding hearts

Yesterday's eleventh-hour conversion of the National Association of Pension Funds to the idea of a more limited form of compensation plan will be welcomed by those inside and outside the industry. The Goode committee set up to consider appropriate responses to the Robert Maxwell scandal will doubtless take note of the weight of submissions in favour of compensation arrangements for fraud on pension funds but not in cases of maladministration or underfunding.

The NAPF was surely pushing its luck and its credibility with earlier proposals. These would effectively have levied pension fund contributors in order to make up for the incompetence, or worse, of the pension industry professionals that are the core membership of NAPF. This may be the simplest way of ensuring a smooth maintenance of the status quo. But it will have given the impression of complacency and tolerance of less than best practice. After all, the status quo also allowed Robert Maxwell the scope to pillage funds he held in trust.

The NAPF should know that bleeding hearts are no substitute for hard heads in such matters. As is all too apparent in America, well-intentioned but woolly-minded compensation schemes produce perverse results. America's federal deposit insurance scheme surely encourages bad banking practice by underwriting the failures of banks that act imprudently. The scheme also encourages imprudence elsewhere. Depositors are offered a substantial level of protection and may be tempted to forget the need for prudential scrutiny of a bank prior to opening a deposit account and simply go wherever the highest rates are on offer.

Likewise, in their original form, the NAPF proposals would have subsidised negligent administration and unrealistically low levels of company contribution and led to some cynical undercutting of management fees and charges at the fringes of the business. Whether the NAPF likes it or not and however unfair, the vast army of professional advisers, administrators and investment experts who make a comfortable living from pension schemes have all been tarnished by the Maxwell fiasco. The industry will never rebuild its image or increase the attractions of making retirement provision without a long hard look in the mirror.

Barclays grief

Rarely has a chairman-elect of a major organisation been forced to suffer such slings and arrows as Andrew Buxton. His journey to the top of the bank once seemed a gentle stroll. Now it has become tortuous, and he should think about turning back. Barclays' record provision against Imry is a serious blot on Mr Buxton's previously unblemished copybook. Granted, he never originated the £422 million loans, and he may never have even examined the figurework closely. But as managing director in 1989 he had a key role in the board's decision to approve the main £215 million loan. A leveraged buyout is always a risky proposition and Barclays' decision to lend so much to Markenchief and Imry, even on the crest of a property boom, smacks of reckless imprudence.

Mr Buxton has admitted he may appoint a chief executive to work alongside him at some later date, but institutional shareholders are still outraged that the bank should fly in the face of current practice and hand both top jobs to one man, even if only temporarily.

In the light of all this opposition, Mr Buxton must reconsider his determination to take both the top jobs at the bank on January 1. He owes it not only to Barclays but the banking industry as a whole, which would welcome signs of humility.

Philip Robinson
examines some of the reasons why the United States has proved to be a graveyard for so many British retailers

For years, America has eaten British retailers alive. Through a combination of bad luck or poor judgment, few UK store groups have ever realised the dream of repeating their home success in the world's largest consumer market.

Some have thrown in the towel. Last month, Storehouse, once dogged by the poor performance of its American Mothercare chain, sold its US Conran's Habitat operations to Marvin Traub, the retailer who made Bloomingdale's famous as a glitzy store on Manhattan's upper east side.

Isosceles, drained by its American losses and poised for its third debt restructuring, has been searching in vain for a buyer of its US Herman's Sporting Goods operations for more than eight months. It has finally written down the business to \$50 million while claiming it is capable of \$600 million sales. Earlier this year, the recession and the shoot-from-the-hip style of its former chairman washed the shine from Ratners and almost swept its gold and jewellery business into the melting pot.

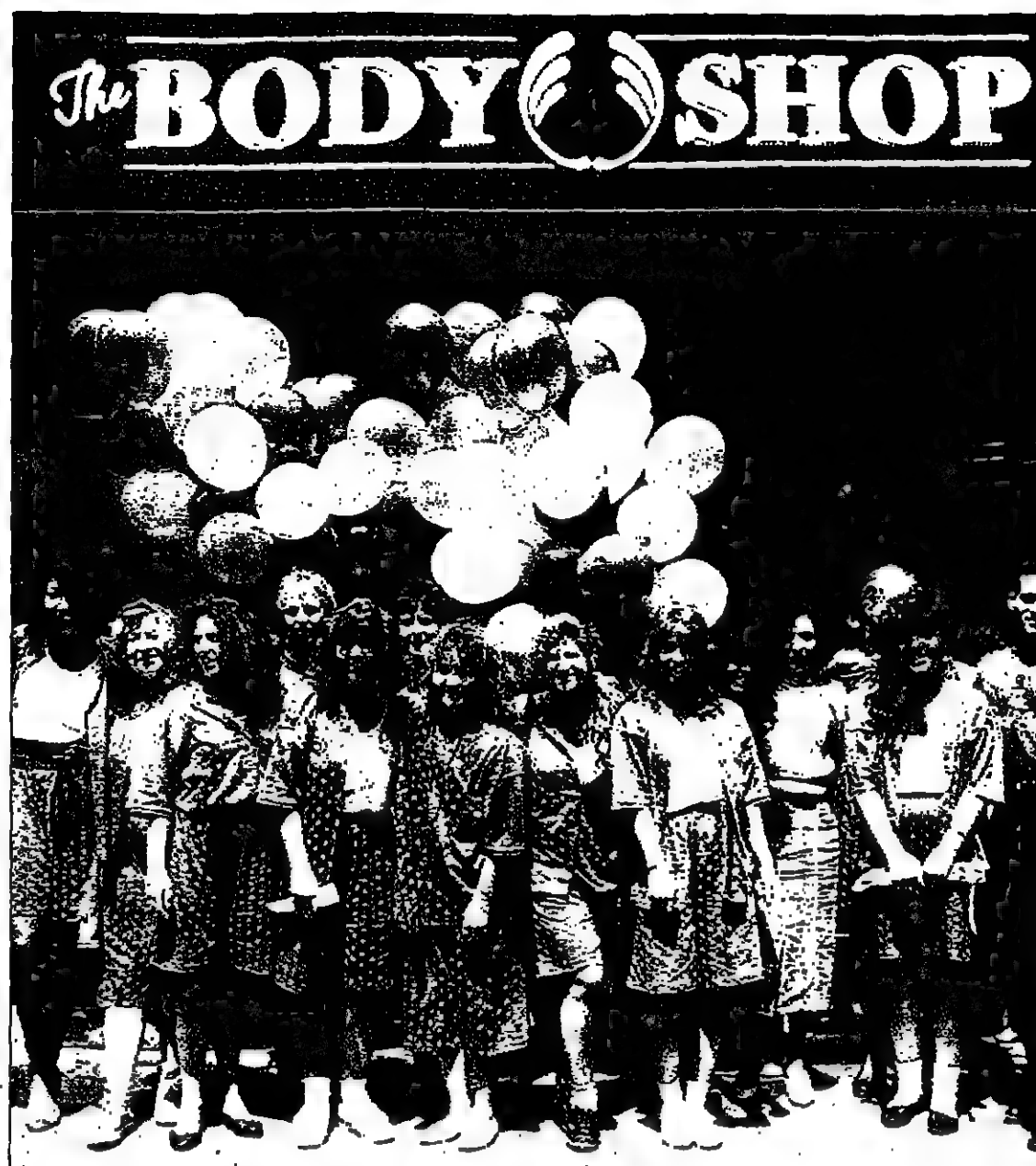
James Maxmin, the anglophile American chief executive of Laura Ashley, has spent much of the past year gradually changing the old English rose image of its stores in an attempt to transform it from a one-concept company which independent consultants say was looking increasingly outdated.

And last year BAT Industries sold Marshall Field's, the Chicago retailer, and Saks Fifth Avenue, the New York store chain, under takeover threat from financiers Sir James Goldsmith, Jacob Rothschild and Kerry Packer, who argued the sum of the conglomerate's parts were worth more than the whole.

Pam Stubing, retail analyst with Moody's Investors Services, said: "It's not only UK companies which have trouble here. A great many US retailers have had trouble in Europe. I think it's a culture problem and a very fine line of managerial judgment can be the difference between death or success."

The French group Galeries Lafayette is having trouble with its Manhattan store — people say it is not French enough — if they change, maybe others will say it is not American enough. Without question, America is incredibly competitive and I'm not sure overseas companies really appreciate what that means before they set up here," she added.

Two UK chains stand out in America: one for its immediate US appeal, the other for determination. Anita Roddick's "cosmetics with a conscience" Body Shop chain has been a conspicuous success. Despite recent UK profit warnings from the group, its American business is



Conspicuous success: the rapidly growing Body Shop chain has recently opened its 100th US shop

reported to have grown eight fold and opened its hundredth store in the half year to the end of August.

Marks and Spencer takes the award for determination. Sir Richard Greenbury, its chairman and chief executive, was in New York last month telling American newspapers and magazines that despite rumours in Britain to the contrary, he had no intention of selling Brooks Brothers. He told American journalists tartly: "We're here for the long run."

The traditional men's clothing store for which M&S paid \$750 million in 1988 is claimed to be providing returns at last. Severe cost cutting and tighter management controls via an inventory computer system pushed operating profits up 30 per cent for the six months to the end of September on a 10 per cent sales increase. That built on a 64 per cent operating profits rise in the year ending last March, when sales rose only 4.6 per cent.

With the purchase of the 174-year-old retailing chain, M&S took on a monumental task of transformation. Its traditional customers, those who think little of buying a \$600 suit, are

resistant to change but came from a time past. The installation of escalators is reported to have almost brought on palpitations. The customers Brooks targets, younger clientele, are unaware of any change that would bring them into the store.

The struggle appears far from over. In a land where packaging is considered almost everything, M&S refuses to promote. William V. Robert, Brooks Brothers president, says: "We don't spend a whole lot on advertising and marketing — we don't believe in it." But retail consultants believe it will have to shout in from the tops of a Manhattan skyscraper before it brings in the younger set.

Walter Levy, an independent New York retail consultant, believes Brooks is trapped in its past image. He said: "They have no credibility with the updated customer. They cannot go out of their suits." Brooks Brothers' present idea of being hip is a new line of mix and match suits for prices between \$240 and \$325, called its Wardrobe Collec-

tion. Its new range of shirts carries, rather daringly, a button visible through the breast pocket.

A further sacrifice to twentieth century retailing is the display of the men's boxer shorts, now in stand-alone racks. For the store which dressed presidents, the Rockefellers and Hollywood film stars, to have the underwear outside the protection of glass topped cabinets is viewed as an important breakthrough.

The store recognises changes which the recession has brought by the quintessential suit-wearers of Wall Street bankers, brokers and lawyers into unemployment. Despite the bumper bonuses predicted for those still employed this year, Brooks believes many of them will think twice before spending \$600 on a suit. And it dismisses adverse consumer reports on one of its suits, saying it was a 1989 model and would not be available in the stores today.

Ms Stubing added: "I don't know about Brooks. People are just not wearing suits any more. Men's clothing is the first thing to be sacrificed in a recession. Marks and Spencer paid an awful lot of money

for the store and they have been incredibly patient, but who knows for how long?"

General optimism among retailers is growing, however. The Christmas selling season in America, which starts just after the Thanksgiving holiday, got off to a strong start on November 27 with queues around the block at the famous New York toy store, FAO Schwarz. Economists expect a 5 per cent to 8 per cent rise in takings this year, changing the earlier view that this could be the third consecutive season of gloom.

Retailers are reluctant to open the champagne this far from Christmas, and it remains to be seen whether a growing consumer confidence will translate into sales for all sectors.

For Ratners, which will close 150 of 1,000 US stores over the next three years, the jury is still out. Suzanne Wolkstein, Moody's analyst on the company, said: "It's too early to judge whether this apparent rebound in confidence will send consumers out buying high-end jewellery again."

"Sterling [the US arm of Ratners] is highly geared to diamond sales. I think they will benefit, but it remains to be seen how much this will affect high-end products. Jewellery was always thought to be recession-proof... graduation, engagement, marriage, these were things which continue whatever the economy, but this was shown to be false. You do not need a big diamond ring to get engaged," she added.

A graphic example of tough conditions arrived recently with the decision by Tiffany to stage a promotion and attempt to sell itself as an affordable jeweller emphasising the average price of a Tiffany purchase was \$200.

Ms Wolkstein added: "You can see how tough things have become when a store like Tiffany takes a chance promoting itself as middle range and affordable. This is not truly its image, but it has to do something because people are not going to be spending the big money."

Those taking the retailing temperature across the American shopping malls last weekend confirmed the trend toward practical presents. Large department stores are now challenging chains such as The Gap, selling simple turn-of-the-century shirts and jogging suits at below the prices of the high street chains.

Although sales at The Gap are beginning to show signs of tailing off, it is one of only two US companies held up as successfully selling its formula abroad.

Toys R Us is the other. Toy retailers report no super-selling toy this year, which will spread spending over several products. The craze for video games has been replaced by dolls and bicycles. And gifts include the odd sing-along Karaoke machine. Lyrics of the shopkeepers' favourite tune would speak of a cold snap in the weather to encourage a festive mood among shoppers and a better economy, the cornerstone of high street profits.

What makes them shiver is whether spending will be sustained when President Clinton's tax increases begin to bite into middle class incomes next year.

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Minorco plays happy families

IN THE week before Christmas, it is happy families time at Minorco, the natural resources group with close connections with Anglo-American, De Beers and the legendary Harry Oppenheimer. Harry's son-in-law, Hank Slack, Minorco's president since 1985, becomes Minorco's chief executive, and Minorco's two joint managing directors have resigned — Roger Phillimore, Harry's godson, is off to dabble in the arts, while Tony Lea goes back to his old stomping ground, South Africa. He will rejoin Anglo-American in a senior position, yet to be announced. Peter Burnell, nine years with Anglo in South America, and more recently, a consultant to Midland Bank, joins Minorco's board. Just to prove that you do not have to be related to be taken on, Peter Wilnot-Sitwell, chairman of SG Warburg Securities and vice-chairman of SG Warburg Group, also takes up a director's seat.

Baring down

MORE signs of loss of confidence are emerging in the European department at Barings Securities. After making a major retreat from Europe in September, with redundancies from top to bottom, Baring is now losing Adrian Phillips, head of European research for the past year. Phillips, 36, joined Baring after ten years at Kleinwort Benson where he was rated the number one German analyst by



Extel. Known to be unhappy with Baring's recent decisions, he is returning to his old sector as head of German research at Société Générale Equities. Hugh Hughes, managing director of SGE, says he is delighted finally to have Phillips on board — he first tried to recruit him at Savory Mill five years ago.

PAUL Keating, Australia's irrepressibly republican prime minister, was obviously trying to mask the impact of his government's decision to sell a quarter of the national carrier Qantas (the former Qantas Empire Airways) to the noble Lord King's British Airways when he announced yesterday that new Australians would no longer need to swear allegiance to the Queen. Vive l'Australie libre. Lord King is, no doubt, thinking.

Japanese landings

THERE were always those who compared strategic inward investment in this coun-

try by the big Japanese corporations with the creation of aircraft carrier Britain — moored off continental Europe ready to dispatch locally built Japanese cars and consumer electronics into battle over European market share. Could it be that earnest Japanese investors have taken it all too seriously? It certainly makes one wonder, when Toyota opens a new plant near Derby on a former airfield, Honda's plant at Swindon, Wiltshire, was also built on an old airfield. Is this mere coincidence, or should questions be asked at the Ministry of Defence?

REVENGE was taken on mobile phone-carrying yuppies yesterday among the 170,000 users of Vodafone. High-powered types ringing in for their messages at lunchtime found there were none — only a voice bidding them "goodbye". Vodafone denied a disgruntled employee hacked into the system and sabotaged it by inputting the message, which took two hours to clear. "There was a fault on the playback system," a spokeswoman said. Sounds plausible... Anyone up to no good would probably have left a message that was far more rude.

Masters plan

SINCE the Tate Gallery announced plans for a £100 million new museum of modern art, some people have been wondering if Dennis Stevenson, chairman of the Tate trustees, might use his Docklands connections to secure an interim home for the modern masters. Stevenson, also a director of Pearson, was on the

founding London Docklands Development Corporation and a director until 1988. He is chairman of the Docklands Sinfonietta and, he told us yesterday, does not rule out a temporary Docklands site. "Communications is the absolutely critical issue," he says. "People have got to be able to get there. If I was still on the LDDC I'd be saying this is exactly the reason why we need the Jubilee Line." Currently, the government is hoping to approve the Jubilee Line in the new year. If it does, Stevenson will be open to suggestions.

Ringing a change

THE political antennae were bristling yesterday as next year's top City PR job — the £5 billion privatisation of the third tranche of British Telecom — went to Brunswick rather than Dewe Rogerson, the government's old favourite. DR have handled 90 per cent of the government privatisation work to date and seemed certain to win BT3, worth £2 million in fees. Old hands were suggesting yesterday that it all came down to SG Warburg, the merchant bank. Last week, the government dismayed other banks by giving Warburg all three financial roles on BT3 — global co-ordinator, financial adviser and lead broker. After that, it was thought to be a matter of political expediency to ring the changes on the PR job at least. Earlier this year, Brunswick handled the aborted GPA flotation and the Wellcome share issue but BT3 will be its first government privatisation.

DEBRA ISAAC

BUSINESS LETTERS

Keep new pension measures simple

From Mr C. Brandon Gough Sir, In your Comment (December 15) you provide a neat summation of the multitude of submissions to Professor Roy Goode's Pension Law Review Committee. As chairman of an organisation which has itself recently given its proposals to Professor Goode I endorse your assessment of the key themes that are emerging.

However, I take issue with your conclusion that employees would be necessarily better off investing in personal pensions if companies are unable to meet stringent rules. The Goode Committee has necessarily focused on occupational pension schemes and it is here that any reforms will result, but there remains a danger that a new framework for one part of the pensions fabric will

discriminate against a society's need to provide choice in the provision of pensions. We urge the introduction of simple measures covering pension arrangements so that the need for greater regulation is tempered by the need to encourage occupational pension schemes.

The UK leads Europe in the provision of a cost effective private pension arrangement with the minimum of state intervention. We must endeavour to protect and promote the UK pensions industry while ensuring that the rules are strengthened to prevent abuse. Yours faithfully, C. BRANDON GOUGH, Chairman, Coopers & Lybrand, Chartered Accountants, 1 Embankment Place, WC2.

Postal disservice

From Mr Anthony de Trafford Sir, Five years ago, the postman delivered *The Times* to me. But postal workers apparently complained about the extra work involved and a vote was taken. The rural postmen were all for maintaining the service but were outvoted and rural communities lost a helpful service: they were happy to pay for.

Annoyingly, the deliveries of unwanted leaflets continued, and this service meant the postman had to call at every house regardless. Maybe it is time management decided what tasks its employees performed and they in turn might appreciate the benefits of working for an organisation that fulfilled customer needs to help secure their jobs. Yours faithfully, ANTHONY DE TRAFFORD, Little Wymington, Clyn, Radnorshire.

Ask early for cash

From Mr Richard Witney Sir, I write concerning the correspondence on larger companies and prompt payment. Almost all of our company's clients are "large" and we have absolutely no problems with payment of their accounts within 30 days from invoice.

We do not offer any incentive or discount, we simply "ask for the money", not when it is overdue but always one week before it is due! I have always felt that this is the easy way of ensuring both payment on time and a healthy bank balance. I suspect those who complain are as usual those who just sit back and wait. Yours faithfully, RICHARD WITNEY, Managing Director, Abbey Plastics Ltd, Abbey Works, Rectory Lane, Loughton, Essex.

Computing how to lose customers

From Mr Alan M. Pardoe Sir, A few months ago, I purchased a computer from a manufacturer that is a public limited company. This week, I contacted the company with a view to buying some extra memory for the computer. I spoke to the sales office, who assured me that I could come to their office and purchase the said memory boards.

On my arrival, the salesman went off in search of the items. Twenty minutes later, he reappeared to ask how I was going to pay for them. I said by cheque, backed with a guarantee card. The sum involved was about £160. He said that they would only release goods on cleared cheques or by credit card or cash.

I do not have any credit cards, nor had I £160 in my pocket, and I pointed out that I could write out two cheques to cover the total, each covered by a £100 cheque card; but no, he was quite adamant. I was not pleased, having made a round trip of 50 miles and taken most of the afternoon to achieve nothing.

I find this attitude quite incredible; all they had to do was to make a telephone call to ascertain the validity of the card and cheque. This is precisely what a rival company did for me the next day and the boards were £40 cheaper! Have any of your readers had similar experiences? Yours faithfully, ALAN M. PARDOE, Willow Cottage, Lower Dingle, West Malvern, Worcestershire.

Letters to *The Times* Business and Finance section can be sent by fax on 071-782 5112.

Chatset's record is not so dotty

From Mr John Rew Sir, You recently carried criticism of our *Guide to Syndicate Run-offs*, including a quote that our figures were "dotty". Any member of Lloyd's would be excused for wishing that we did not have such a reliable record for accurate prediction; although we are alert for signs of hubris.

We are seeing the fruits of years of indiscipline and lack of rectitude among market practitioners, which are not going to be blown away by frothy comments.

The great imponderable about Lloyd's, and the thought that must deter any punter from joining this no longer exclusive club, is that it has always been wrong to be optimistic and, particularly, that longtail liabilities appear to be only capable of producing unpleasant surprises. Yours faithfully, JOHN REW, Chatset Ltd, PO Box Number 661, SW1.

Indirect advisers

From Mr Grenville Hewitt Sir, In her article on the advisory panel that is to help economic decision-making (December 9), Janet Bush quotes the Chief Economic Adviser to the Treasury as saying: "We really want to hear what these people have to say and, indirectly, the Chancellor will hear it." I am amazed that the Chancellor will only hear from the experts "indirectly" and thereby risk distortion and censorship. Yours faithfully, GRENVILLE HEWITT, 52 Makins Road, Henley on Thames, Oxfordshire.

INFOTECH

No hiding place from big Ears

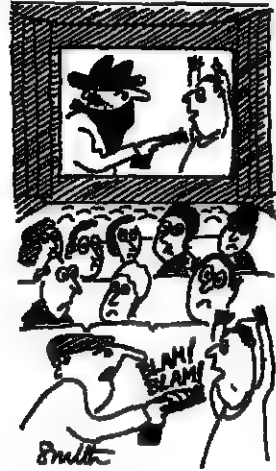
ONLINE

Movie madness

A FILM where the audience is able to choose from 68 plot lines, determine the fate of characters and the story ending had its premiere in New York this week.

As the 20-minute-long, high-tech, interactive film progressed, the 75 members of the audience shouted among themselves about the choices flashed on the screen. Each seat was fitted with a pistol grip with three buttons so viewers could vote.

Members of the audience can vote at designated plot junctures. Results are instantly tallied and displayed on the screen and the film moves ahead in the



chosen direction. The majority rules.

The film, *I'm Your Man*, was shown at a specially equipped cinema in Manhattan. Seven similar cinemas are to be opened in the United States in the next two months.

Sore point

HOSPITAL computer systems are not helping patients, according to a report by the Audit Commission.

It says nurses are not keen on using computers, and often do not receive proper training on how to use them. Hospital managers are also making little constructive use of the data

once it had been obtained and none of the hospitals in the study had estimated the full costs or benefits of the new systems.

Mini marvel

FUJITSU is to launch an £800 pocket mobile phone in the United States that has a built-in voice answer chip. When users are unable or unwilling to answer their phone, a built-in pager answers calls. The feature can record up to five telephone numbers.

Disc-count

BRITONS benefit from the cheapest compact discs in the EC — while the Irish pay the most. The finding comes despite complaints that disc prices are kept artificially high in Britain.

The cost of living survey, carried out by Employment Conditions Abroad, found the average price of a CD in Britain was £12.78. In Ireland the same discs cost £17.13.

Brain wave

A NEW microwave technology capable of simultaneously transmitting dozens of television channels has been approved in America. Cellular Vision is a microwave system that uses calls similar to those in cellular telephone systems to transmit video to homes equipped with a small window antenna.

In contrast to cable TV systems, which entail digging up the road to bury the wiring, Cellular Vision uses radio signals capable of transmitting up to 49 channels.

Spy or nerd?

A COMPUTER whizkid, aged 28, who reportedly once tested security procedures for the United States defence department in the 1980s, has become the first alleged computer hacker in America to be charged with espionage. The US government says Kevin Lee Poulsen stole classified military secrets and should go to prison. But his lawyer calls him "an intellectually curious computer nerd". Mr Poulsen worked as a consultant testing Pentagon computer security.

High technology in schools could put an end to the age old problem of pupils playing truant, reveals Nick Nuttall

About 300 pupils at a London school will, after the Christmas holidays, take part in a pilot project that could consign the traditional school register to the museum. The students, based at the North Westminster Community School, are to have their morning and afternoon attendance record logged by a laptop computer which can then be checked at the start of each lesson.

The system, which will connect classrooms directly with a larger personal computer in the school office by radio link, is being tested as a weapon in the fight against truancy.

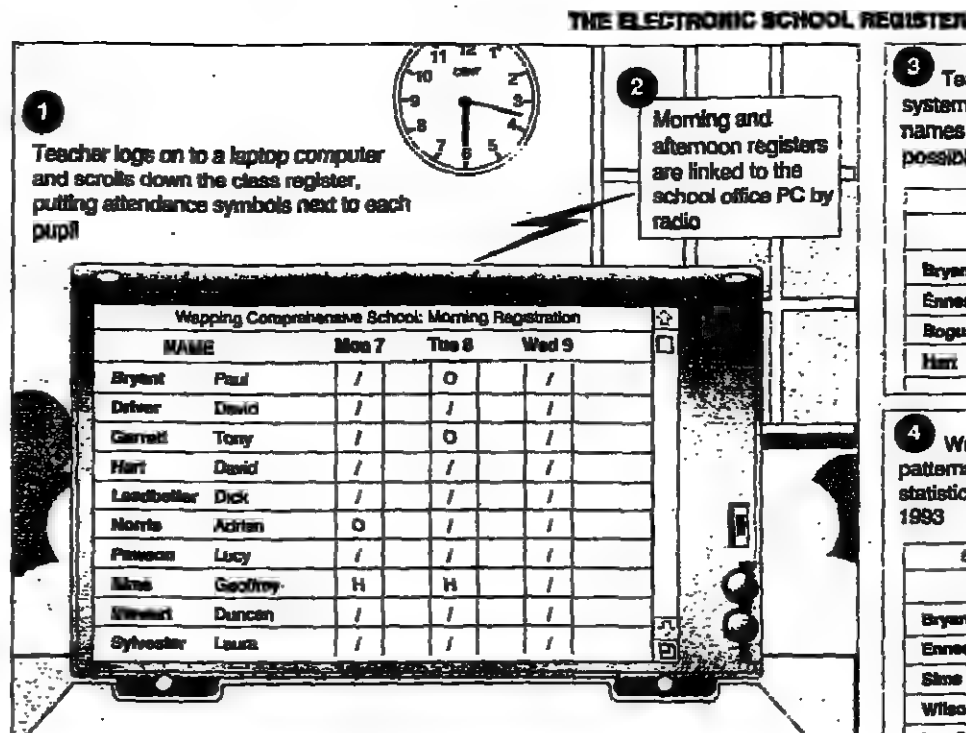
Under new Department for Education rules, which come into force next September, schools will have to publish truancy rates. The department announced a £10 million package in July to encourage local education authorities to test innovative ideas using new technology to compile the figures and combat absenteeism.

Up to 60 of 108 local education authorities in England could be successful in securing government grants in the New Year and several manufacturers of rival technologies are vying to win contracts to supply systems to schools.

The scheme at the North Westminster will test a technology called the Electronic Attendance Registration System (Ears). It is the invention of engineers at Bromcom, a company based in Bromley, Kent. Ali Gurey, the managing director, says more than 20 school authorities want to test the pilot system, which he estimates will cost between £8,000 and £15,000.

Tony Fieldhouse, the headmaster of Manor Farm Community School, Walsall, in the West Midlands, is enthusiastic about the system. Over the past three years the secondary school, which teaches pupils aged 11 to 18, has been developing a formula — using information such as reading age and sex — to predict a child's likely attendance.

Mr Fieldhouse believes this experimental work could have national significance. "We are seeking finan-



Teacher logs on to a laptop computer and scrolls down the class register, putting attendance symbols next to each pupil.

Morning and afternoon registers are linked to the school office PC by radio.

The system can also be programmed to print a standard letter to parents, for the head to sign, that asks them to account for their child's absence.

Other systems are also being looked at to meet the education department rules. Some schools, such as the Elizabeth Garrett Anderson school in Islington, north London, have been testing swipe or smart cards. These cards can be swiped through reading equipment to log attendance and give pupils and teachers access to classrooms.

Martin Coles, the deputy head, denies that swipe cards have created a prison mentality at the school. He believes suggestions that the cards smack of "Big Brother" are misplaced and reflect the attitudes of older people rather than students growing up in a modern high-tech world. "The

attitude of the girls is that the cards give them more responsibility, which they respect," Mr Coles says. But Mr Fieldhouse has reservations about these type of systems. "We see difficulty with the smart card. It could be open to considerable abuse in the hands of children. What happens if they swap their cards, or one collects several from pupils who decide to be absent?"

Some schools, including North Westminster Community School and Tower Hamlets College, have been

claimed for Ears is that it can spot pupils attending morning and afternoon registers, but who then skip lessons. Precisely how many children are indulging in this form of truancy is not known, but the numbers are believed to be high. Figures suggest that in some inner-city schools more than half the pupils that should be present are absent in their last year of compulsory education.

A better picture will be available in January when researchers at the truancy unit of the University of

'In some inner-city schools more than half the pupils are absent in their last year of compulsory education'

North London publish results from an in-depth survey.

Using Ears, teachers taking lessons during the day can log into the system and query the morning and afternoon register. The office computer will match the list of children that should be taking, say, geography at 11 o'clock with their morning registers from various forms. By scanning the database from the classroom, the geography teacher can instantly see which pupils appear to have skipped class.

One of the main advantages being

THE ELECTRONIC SCHOOL REGISTER

Teachers taking lessons later in the day can log on to the system from the classroom. The office PC will send back the names of pupils who should be in class, alerting teachers to possible truants.

5th year Geography: Friday 9th October				
NAME	Registration (am)	Class registration		
Bryant	Paul	/		O
Ennesse	Jean	/		O
Bogus	Mary Jane	/		/
Hart	David	/		/

Welfare officers can program the system to study suspicious patterns of pupil attendance. Schools must compile truancy statistics to meet new education department rules in September 1993.

5th year Geography: Friday afternoon persistent truancy record				
NAME	Sep 19	Sep 25	Oct 2	Oct 9
Bryant	Paul	O	O	O
Ennesse	Jean	O	O	O
Sims	Geoffrey	/	O	O
Willson	Colin	/	O	O
Landthorpe	Mark	/	/	O

Pass the choc ices, love

For the armchair film-buff the Japanese are marketing a TV costing £3,300. Or you can do it yourself starting at about £6



Philips is to sell CD-Movie TVs and sing-along systems

An orgy of television watching is about to take place as the nation prepares for Christmas. This year those with the space and money can take advantage of the latest developments to install systems that manufacturers are referring to as "home cinema".

Although in its infancy, the makers of such systems hope that they will eventually be able to interest millions in ever bigger screens and hi-fidelity sound in an attempt to recreate the quality of cinema screens and sound systems without leaving the armchair.

Because most televisions in use today are monophonic, the sound tracks of films and videos are compressed from their original stereo sound into one channel. Using the latest systems, however, film and video sound is decoded so that sound tracks are changed back into the surround sound stereo of the original.

Acquiring such systems, however, can take plenty of money and space. Pioneer offers a 50-inch widescreen projection television for £3,300 and is selling a 70 inch model in Japan. A more modest state-of-the-art Toshiba television costs £2,000 for a 34-inch screen with external speakers, built-in Naim stereo and Dolby surround-sound decoder. Naim, or near instantaneous compounded audio multiples sound, is now broadcast on some programmes with transmitters able to deliver compact-disc clarity to about 90 per cent of the country.

Dolby surround sound is the four-channel sound used for many films. Decoded in the home, it divides the sound into left and right stereo, background sound and a central channel for dialogue.

But a do-it-yourself ap-

proach to home cinema can provide cheaper access to this technology. "Despite the recession, home cinema keeps growing," claims John Hollingsworth, the manager of the Manchester electronics store Practical Hi-Fi.

"People are building complete systems for £900 to £1,000 with a new amplifier, two rear speakers and an extra dialogue speaker," he says.

Demand for home cinema systems is highest from fans of effects-packed action film spectacles of the *Terminator* or *Rambo* variety.

Although the value of a dialogue channel speaker for these films might be questionable, keen home-cinema addicts say that a sub-woofer for extra bass is a must.

For added realism, a third digital decoding system called Pro-Logic can be used to replicate the acoustics of given locations, such as a theatre or concert hall.

Most stereo televisions with

Naim cost about £400, but the same effect can be achieved by attaching a Naim video cassette recorder to an ordinary television set.

The specialist magazine *What Video* recommends linking a Naim VCR to a hi-fi system and then parking its speakers either side of an old set as the cheapest way to achieve stereo television.

Alternatively, Cambridge-based Arcam has developed a £200 Naim television tuner which can be used to produce Naim sound through a hi-fi system.

In the event that immersion in so-called "real sound" from these devices fails to satisfy, a number of alternative sensory delights are also on the horizon.

In the middle distance are emerging technologies such as 1250-line high-definition televisions that will cost around £2,000, while further into the future is that science-fiction favourite three-dimensional television.

Japanese camera manufacturer Ikegami has devised a twin-lens camera to create 3-D pictures for television that display at a rate of 100 times a second.

The 3-D image would be broadcast on odd and even lines on a television screen and viewed through special polarised glasses, a prospect only slightly less enticing than the use of virtual reality headsets.

These interactive systems, which contain tiny liquid crystal displays, could even be linked to a computer image bank which would respond to movements of the headgear.

One interactive technology that will be launched next year by Philips and JVC is CD-Movie. Based on laser disc technology its chief uses are expected to be in sing-along karaoke systems and eventually in interactive films.

Perhaps the least costly route to enhanced viewing pleasure lies in sharpening television reception with the use of a Scart lead that can cost as little as £5.

This device uses a pair of 21-pin connectors designed to enable you to link televisions, videos and other units by bypassing the aerial socket.

FRANCES PEARCE

Morse prices on Toshiba

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T4400XP 80MB...£1995	£1490	T4400XP 120MB...£2475	£1650
T3300SX 386, 120MB, colour TFT, mains portable...£4699			£1990
T6400SX 486SX/25MB, 120MB/4MB, plasma...£2895			£2250
T6400DX 486DX/33MB, 200MB/4MB, plasma...£3850			£2750
T6400DXC 486DX/33MB, 200MB/4MB, colour TFT...£2350			£2995

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OPERA page 28

Graham Clark gets more directorial help than he really needs in ENO's new Janáček staging

ARTS

DANCE page 29

Tchaikovsky: would he have revised his music for The Nutcracker if he had lived longer?



Still life at the end of the world

GALLERIES: Richard Cork on the disturbing work of Tim Head, in which nothing is quite what it seems

Entering the Whitechapel Art Gallery is like finding yourself transported, for a second, from the traffic-choked winter city to an empty stretch of countryside in high summer. The immense floor is covered entirely with cricket-pitch green, and the far wall has become a clear expanse of sky blue. Untroubled to the point of blandness, this seemingly idyllic locale promises an exhibition filled with innocent delight.

But Tim Head, whose mini-retrospective takes up both floors of the gallery, ensures that the placidity is short-lived. As our feet crunch jarringly on the hard Astroturf carpeting, the illusion of nature's hugeness gives way to a nasty synthetic alternative. And the blue side-walls turn out to be an ironic backdrop for two-tiered ranks of billboard-size images, presiding over the space like vast, implacable sentinels.

The change of mood is disquieting. Suddenly, the whole ground-floor space with its sturdy white pillars resembles the nave of a temple.

So which alien gods are protected by the forms gazing out from the walls? Head does not reveal their identity. But whether they resemble simulators, goggles or shields, their speckled, metallic sheen suggests armoured surveillance. They lurk in their canvases like helmeted presences, silently dedicated to monitoring every move we make.

The scanned ink-jet process employed to print these enigmatic images adds to their eeriness. Neither convex nor concave, they hover on their grey half-tone grounds as spectres from another world. The fact that Head based them on shapes used in packaging and presentation does nothing to detract from their ominous impact. By the time he has transformed them with the aid of photo-copying, collage and enlargement, their familiarity is masked by mystery. They look like mutants, serving the indefinable purpose of a Big Brother whose passion for control is boundless. Head has grouped the whole series under the collective title *Thirteen Most Wanted*, and their lipsonal air of menace might well signify criminal intent.

In the end, though, these hybrids frustrate any attempt to limit them to a single meaning. And Head himself shares their elusiveness. Now in his mid-forties, he first

gained a reputation during the 1970s for his intriguing yet tantalising installations with projected light and a minimum of props. Spare, delicately calculated and almost hallucinatory in their effect, they confounded expectations but stopped well short of the sinister implications evenhandedly his recent work. Although they questioned the camera's supposed objectivity, and left the viewer with an awareness of conundrum, Head was not yet ready to spike them with Kafkaesque unease.

In the Whitechapel's small audio-visual room, a slide presentation smoothly documents many of these early installations. While conveying very little of their former power, the slide piece does at least prove how much Head has changed since then. For the audio-visual room is opposite the gallery's cafe, where one wall has been lined with a recent, banner-like frieze of identical, voracious faces, all bent on devouring each other. His starting-point here was the smiling head motif used in the Happy Easter motorway restaurants. By removing the hand and enlarging the open mouth to a grotesque extent, he ends up with a consumerist nightmare of cannibalistic proportions. Its cartoonishness could hardly be further removed from the cool, almost rarefied understatement of his early installations.

Even so, the cafe piece is in no sense typical of Head's work today. The stairs to the upper galleries terminate in a darkened chamber, lit only by two dimly glowing ultra-violet tubes lodged in the ceiling. They ensure that hundreds of self-adhesive labels festooning the walls stand out against the blackness like a myriad multi-coloured stars. Spattered with orange, scarlet and green particles, which shine more vividly than their blue companions, this seductive room shows how much unexpected poetry can be conjured from banal, ready-made stationer's ware. Head gives the installation a sting in the tail by calling it *Made on Earth*, thereby emphasising that the entire heavenly vision is based on nothing more uplifting than ephemeral, secular products.

Emerging from the womb-like prettiness of *Made on Earth*, we are confronted with a harsher diagnosis of contemporary life. In the Orwellian year of 1984, Head decided to become a studio-based photographer for a while. He assembled a gruesome array of the sleaziest objects on sale in the shops, and built them up into a monstrous metropolis where pink dildos become skyscrapers and scale models of nuclear bombers glide through the streets. Saturated with images of commercialised sex, Nazi insignia, computer war-games and garish cosmetics, *State of the Art* amounts to a lurid indictment of the late 20th century at its most squalid. Head stresses the saleability of this tawdry merchandise by photographing his tableaux as glossy as the most hard-hitting advertisement. But despite the horrible opulence of this large Cibachrome photograph, everything seems to be veiled in dimness—as if a veil had been smeared over the lens.



Giverny after the Fall: puce plastic debris pollutes a location akin to Monet's water-lily pond in Tim Head's *Petrochemicalland III*, 1991

direction. Dwelling so heavily on extinction threatened to rob his art of its subtlety. The stealthy complexity of the installations was exchanged for an openly polemical stance, fired by gloomy warnings of decadence and the grave.

Once Head turned his attention to despoiled landscapes, though, revulsion was tempered by a paradoxical sense of attraction. The glutinous substances floating in *Toxic Lagoon* stir our appalled fascination as they seem to grow like fungi in the dyed blue water. As for the puce plastic debris bobbing in *Petrochemicalland III*, it pollutes a location akin to Monet's water-lily pond: Giverny after the Fall.

The feeling of loss becomes clearer still when Head's attitude to food is compared with the Pop artists, whose interests he often shares. They celebrated the consumerist abundance of supermarket shelves, whereas he views the same subject with anxiety and nausea. Taking a high-spirited design from Sainsbury's milk cartons, Head distorted the merry cows so violently that they end up as Dubuffet-like biological monstrosities. The other surprise about *Cow Mutations*, which won the John Moores First Prize in 1987, is that Head painted it by hand on canvas

— something he had not done since his student days. The abstraction inherent in the mutation of images allows Head to escape from the over-literal emphasis of photographic works like *Still Life (Eraser)*. It also allows him to roam more freely through the image-bank opened up by technological advances. Satellite radar recordings provided him with a new map of the world, and he uses it in *Dark Planet* to produce a writhing, seething vision of a world convulsed with unnamed terrors. Acid-green forms flicker and swirl against blackness, as if struggling to retain their coherence. They look vulnerable, and Head is in no

mood to hold out facile hopes about their long-term survival. Downstairs, by contrast, *Thirteen Most Wanted* loom down from their walls, waiting for the moment to assume full, dehumanised control.

Tim Head is at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, Whitechapel High Street, London E1 (071-377 0107) until Feb 28

●ART FROM CONTEMPORARY CROATIA: The most amazing thing about this show is that it has been put on at all, emanating as it does from a Zagreb so recently in the front line. Not so surprising is the variety and vitality of the Croatian art on display: strongly expressive colour is the rule, whether the art is tending towards abstraction, like many of the paintings at the Mall Galleries, or more to the sophisticated/naïve, like those at Roy Miles. And though the show is in aid of Croatian medical charities, very little in it refers to war or pain; for all the emotional intensity, optimism keeps breaking through. Mall Galleries, The Mall, SW1. (071-930 6844) Daily 10am-5pm. Roy Miles Gallery, 29 Bruton St, W1. (071-495 4747) Mon-Sat 9am-6pm, Sun 11am-4pm, until December 22.

●A CENTURY OF MUSICALS: Of all theatrical forms, the musical, from grand opera to revue, must have spawned the most spectacular, exotic and irrational designs. At the top of the scale you have Bakst and Lovat Fraser; lower down you have Ernő and Gladys Calthrop. Most of the original designs in this show belong to the lower strata, but are no less diverting for that. Lyttelton Circle Foyer, National Theatre, South Bank, SE1. (071-928 2033) Daily 10am-midnight, until Feb 6.

●DAWSON'S ARMY: Eric Dawson was 21 when he was called up in 1939, and spent most of his war in North Africa. A serious artist with the skills of a cartoonist, he clearly used his wartime sketch books as a sort of diary, recording the soldier's life mainly off duty and mainly unheroic. The result is a charming and vivid record. National Army Museum, Royal Hospital Road, SW3. (071-730 0717) Mon-Sat 10am-5.30pm, Sun 2-5.30pm, until May 31. Closed Dec 24-26, Jan 1.

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

'Revulsion is tempered by a paradoxical sense of attraction'

Rambert boss makes sudden exit

TIME for a change at the financially beleaguered Rambert Dance Company? The company has announced the sudden departure of its artistic director, Richard Alston. "As part of the ongoing development of Rambert Dance Company the board announces that Richard Alston will shortly be leaving his position as artistic director," the brief statement said. "The board thanks him for his contribution in recent years and will announce further plans for the future of Rambert Dance Company in the new year." Alston's departure calls into question the future of the works he choreographed for Rambert since becoming director in 1986.

●MARCH 30 is the date set for the London opening of the latest Broadway musical to hit the West End. City of Angels, with its Cy Coleman music, will open at the Prince of Wales Theatre, following previews from March 19. The show, set in the world of 1940s private eye films and musical comedies, ran for two years on Broadway, picking up six Tony awards.

Leap year?

THE long-awaited British debut of William Forsythe's Frankfurt Ballet will be one of



the highlights of the 1993 Year of Dance, which takes place in the East Midlands next year. The Frankfurt company, which will present works by its American director, will appear at the Leicester Haymarket in October.

More than 100 professional dance companies and over 2,000 amateurs will take part in the Year of Dance, the second of the Arts Council's

Arts 2000 initiatives which this year celebrated music in Birmingham. "Dance For 93" will be held at 60 venues in the East Midlands.

Highlights from Britain include the world premiere (January 27, Derby Playhouse) of Arc Dance Company's latest creation, *Antic*, based on *Hamlet* and choreographed by Kim Brandstrup; and two commissions specially conceived for Nottingham's Angel Row Gallery from Rosemary Butcher (March 16) and Shobana Jeyasingh (June 14).

●PAINTERS do not need paintbrushes! "Discarding

the Brush" is the theme of the major exhibition at the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam this winter. It is about the art of Chinese finger painting, of which the greatest exponent was a Peking court official and minister of justice, Gao Qipei (1660-1734). He used his long, sharp nails, dipped in black ink, to produce fine, detailed pictures of birds and flowers. As his nails grew blunter he turned to landscapes with sweeping lines and splashes of ink. Then he would sharpen his nails and start again. The show includes 75 scroll paintings and 125 album pages, more than half of them by Gao Qipei. It runs until February 28.

Last chance...

WITH the centenary of Tchaikovsky's death coming up, productions of his ballets will be widespread. But the Royal Ballet scheduled its quota of *Swan Lake* early, and tomorrow night's performance at Covent Garden (071-240 1066/1911) is the last this season. Anthony Dowell's staging has been criticised, but it has more of the classic choreography by Petipa and Ivanov than most, and with Viviana Durante and Irek Mukhamedov in the leads you will probably have to struggle for returns.



Richard Alston: leaving Rambert after six years

IT WOULDN'T BE A PARTY WITHOUT PICKING UP A FEW GUYS.

OUR PRICE

OPERA: Rodney Milnes finds English National Opera's approach to Janáček unsatisfying

Bad jokes, worse judgment

National stereotypes are dangerous territory, but perhaps we need not feel too shy about Czechoslovakia's Good Soldier Švejk and Mr Brouček when ours includes Falstaff, Mr Pickwick and Jeffrey Bernard. Janáček's Brouček opera, The Adventures of Mr Brouček, is pretty chaotic in concept and execution, every bar of it suffused with genius — is of all his works the trickiest for non-Czech audiences to absorb.

At first the composer pined his drunken, philistine petit-bourgeois rant against the art-for-art's-sake cultural community of fin-de-siècle Prague (Mr Brouček's Excursion to the Moon), and they were evenly matched. But the horrors of the first world war sent Janáček back to another episode from Svatopluk Cech's Brouček stories, his involvement in the Hussite Wars (Mr Brouček's Excursion to the 15th Century).

Here the irony is more complex. Brouček, coward and potential quilter, is pitted against fanatical fundamentalist patriots, and Janáček introduced Cech himself, in order to place the action in context, in a long, stirring solo.

For his new English National Opera production at the Coliseum — the last of a Janáček cycle he has been working on for 17 years — David Pountney has added a further dimension and a more cheerful stereotype. Cech (Alberto Remedios) is made up as Václav Havel and watches the whole of the Hussite act from the side of the stage.

Visual references to the 1989 Velvet Revolution, including heart-stopping film of the crowds in Wenceslas Square, are mixed in with the action. This works powerfully, the more so given the current political situation in Czechoslovakia.

That, I fear — though it is worth waiting for — is the end of the good news. We're not reviewing it, I would probably have left the performance



Graham Clark, singing Mr Brouček: an "outstanding character tenor, hideously wasted" in a "hyperinventive" and jokey ENO production

during the first act, simply out of embarrassment at having to watch people whose work I admire and respect falling flat on their faces. The main problem is hyper-

invention. That outstanding character tenor Graham Clark is hideously wasted in the title role. He is famous as an exceptionally physical performer, but his interpretation is restricted to

just that grotesque movement and expression, farcical jinks, with little to suggest the equivocal central character he is playing — and with precious few words. How much better it would have been if only he had been allowed to stand still for ten seconds, think about what he was singing and convey the meaning to the audience.

Jokes were flung at the artistic satire of the Moon act like so much pebble-dash: the Tate bricks joke, the David Freeman joke, the surrealist joke, the Pina Bausch joke. One character was dressed as David Hockney, but what he sings has nothing to do with the painter — the mistaking joke. There were self-regarding Coliseum jokes — the flying bedstead, the green paint/blood, the stripping down to petticoats.

There were in-jokes so arcane that they can have meant something only to a half a dozen people, which is tough on a paying audience. The odd gaps between jokes were plugged with movies. If only the humour had emerged from the text — Pountney himself was responsible for the smart new translation — instead of being applied from the outside and smothering it.

The second act was marginally less frenetic, though Stefanos Lazaridis's decor remained hyperactive and the vital battle conference in Domstik's house was handled with astonishing dumsiness. It was as though Pountney felt that Brouček was a difficult piece that needed "help", but there in the pit was Sir Charles Mackerras to prove him wrong: the music, conducted and played as beautifully as this, and with some fine singing from Vivien Tierny and Bonaventura Bonone, needs no help at all, just "quiet, calm deliberation".

The production is dedicated to Havel and paid for by the audience. In that context, I just wish it had been better.

Captivated by dance and music from another age

Stephen Pettitt on a Lully co-production by Flanders Opera and the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Paris

Passacaille in its final act and the extended sleeping music in the third scene of Act II are wonderful set pieces — but also from Philippe Quinault's rich libretto, though needless to say the characterisation lacks Monteverdi's subtleties.

For Lully, opera meant grand spectacle, but here the spectacle was of a minimalist kind. Not that it lacked impact, as was shown in effects like the falling from a huge abstract canvas in Act II, calculated to miss the prone hero Renaud (the strong and ardent Howard Crook) by a whisker. On another occasion the gates of Hell spectacularly opened up like giant jaws from a single side-stage wall as the figure of Haze (John Hancock) and his chorus of cohorts emerged to tempt

and taunt Armide, the besotted villainess.

Only with the sycophantic prologue, with Wisdom (Noemi Rime) and Glory (Veronique Gens) discussing on a completely bare stage, did the staging seem inadequate. The scene may be rather pointless, when monarchs are no longer worshipped, but something ought to have been said of it.

Clearly, much of a slim budget had been devoted to Elizabeth Neumüller's vast array of costumes. Dancers and chorus continually surprised us with their apparel; sometimes in pastel, candy-coloured suits, sometimes in tight, sexy white, sometimes in evening dress. The Act IV interlude, where Quinault uses the Shakespearean device of encapsulating the whole tragedy

within one scene and giving it a comic slant, was incongruous fun as the troupe, devils in a parody of Edwardian guise, followed a gently lobbed shuttlecock across the stage with rackets, yo-yos and other instruments of leisure, prior to two knights Jérôme Varner and Gilles Ragon being lured by two demons posing as beauties (Rime and Gens again).

Dancing is as vital an ingredient of Lully opera as singing. Decidedly modern, freely expressive in idiom, and inventively choreographed by Stéphanie Aubin, it was beautifully executed by the demons of the Compagnie Larsen. It was a pity that Sylvie Brunet gave a dramatically and vocally uncontrolled account of the anti-heroine, Armide. There could be no more complaints, however, about the playing and singing of the orchestra of La Chapelle Royale and the choir of the Collegium Vocale Ghent, under the spirited direction of Philippe Herreweghe.

JAZZ: Clive Davis enjoys a taste of some appropriately festive jam-making

'Tis the season to be jolly

Bob Wilber's Christmas Parties
Pizza Express

row). The residency ends on Sunday with a tribute to Billy Strayhorn, with Wilber and his group accompanying his partner, the singer Joanne Horton.

The opening session with Whittle combined genial workshouses such as "In A Melonwee" and "Things Ain't What They Used to Be", with a deft rendering of "The Christmas Song" and the Burton Lane-Frank Loesser song "Moments Like This", the title track from Wilber's latest album. One

tempo Zoot Sims number based on "Exactly Like You". After some hurried sotto voce instructions the Mike Payne Trio emerged intact. Wilber impishly dropping in a quote from the original melody as he swapped four-bar phrases with Whittle.

Wilber's versatility is always an advantage in these loose and informal

settings, as he alternates between clarinet, soprano and alto saxophone. The clarinet finds him at his most ostentatious and dynamic, a striking contrast to his more clipped, acidic soprano, while on the lush timbre, never overripe, evokes the effortless lyricism of Johnny Hodges.

The venue had earlier welcomed another multi-instrumentalist, Oscar Klein, a former member of the Dutch Swing College Band, who kept up a juggling act with the trumpet, guitar, harmonica and clarinet. His technique was serviceable at best, but he had the advantage of an engaging personality and the assistance of the larger than life Bessie Smith routines and double entendres of the singer Dana Gillespie.

LONDON

ALCANTARA Handel's opera is given a new staging by the American director Stephen Wadsworth for the Royal Opera. The opera, which is the first of a new series, is given at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01 240 1066) tonight, 7pm.

LONDON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA: Sir George Solti conducts the London Symphony Orchestra in a concert which marks both the centenary of the orchestra's first performance and the year of the conductor's 80th birthday. Barbican, SW1 (01 494 5000) tonight, 7.30pm.

ORFEO: Philip Pickett's radical approach to Monteverdi's cult to all tastes, but the results are usually provocative in the best sense. Here he and the New London Consort turn their attention to the opera's 17th-century Italian origins. The opera is given at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01 240 1066) tonight, 7.30pm.

THE RAMONES: The cartoon punks with the shaggy haircuts are promoting a new album of rockabilly rock and roll numbers. Minors, SW1 (01 494 5000) tonight, 7.30pm, and tomorrow, 12.30pm and 6.30pm, then in repetition.

AN ANNE GET YOUR GUN: Irving Berlin's pre-feminist musical is no model for a feminist woman but the songs are simply terrific. Prince of Wales, Covent Garden, WC2 (01 494 5000) tonight, 7.30pm, and tomorrow, 12.30pm and 6.30pm.

CAROUSEL: Joanna Riding and Michael Hayden star in a triumphant revival of the Rodgers and Hammerstein Broadway musical. National (Finsbury Park), SE1 (01 494 5000) tonight, 7.30pm, and tomorrow, 12.30pm and 6.30pm.

CYRANO DE BERGERAC: Robert Lindsay looks right as the really unlikely hero but the production is too busy to give enough room to the full poignancy of his role. Theatre Royal, Haymarket, SW1 (01 494 5000) tonight, 7.30pm, and tomorrow, 12.30pm and 6.30pm.

HAY FEVER: Very funny, very funny, very funny. The opera is given at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01 240 1066) tonight, 7.30pm, and tomorrow, 12.30pm and 6.30pm.

IT RUNS IN THE FAMILY: Lark in the hospital common room, matron outwitted, doctors humiliated, Ray Cooney laces with his of laughs. Playhouse, Northumberland Avenue, WC2 (01 494 5000) tonight, 7.30pm, and tomorrow, 12.30pm and 6.30pm.

AN IDEAL HUSBAND: Alan Carter, Harmon Ocean and Martin Shaw in a new production of the musical. The opera is given at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01 240 1066) tonight, 7.30pm, and tomorrow, 12.30pm and 6.30pm.

KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN: Theatricality, production of the kind of Kiss of the Spider Woman, the values of Manuel Puig's novel but Chla Rivera make a striking vamp. Shaftesbury, Shaftesbury Avenue

WEEKEND EVENTS

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Karl Knight

BEVERLY CRABBE: Since winning the Best British Composer Award at the Brits, the singer-songwriter has been in the charts with sophisticated, if predictable, love songs. Royal Theatre, Portico Street, off Kingsway, WC2 (01 494 5000) tonight, 7.30pm.

MORRISSEY: The gloom Mancunian has been courted by controversy recently by his own nationalist imagery in his live performances. Musically, however, he is said to be on good form. Alexandra Palace, HX2 (01 494 5000) tonight, 7.30pm.

GEORGE MELLY: The good-natured jazz singer in partnership with John Chilton's Feetwarmers. Riverside, SW1 (01 494 5000) tonight, 7.30pm.

LIVERPOOL: Sir Tracy conducts the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and Choir together with the choir of St George's Primary, Wallasey, in a Christmas card concert including readings by Gabriel Woolf of poetry by John Loe and others. Philharmonic Hall, Hope Street, L69 (01 494 5000) tonight, 7.30pm.

SCARBOROUGH: Alan Ayckbourn's children's show, My Very Own Story, gives the hero not just one look-alike, but two. The opera is given at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, WC2 (01 240 1066) tonight, 7.30pm, and tomorrow, 12.30pm and 6.30pm.

REGIONAL

BIRMINGHAM: Birmingham's premier choir, the Birmingham Ensemble, will perform Britten's cantata St Nicholas and A Boy Was Born together with a new work by John Tavener. Birmingham, B1 (01 494 5000) tonight, 7.30pm.

GLASGOW: The BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra under Takuji Yuasa give seasonal works from Mahler and Beethoven. Glasgow, G1 (01 494 5000) tonight, 7.30pm, and tomorrow, 12.30pm and 6.30pm.

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DANCE: The peculiar history of *The Nutcracker*, the world's most popular ballet. Plus: The Royal Ballet reviewed

Christmas cracker is a kernel bogey

John Percival is puzzled by the universal success of *The Nutcracker*, now 100 years old

One Saturday, while shopping in Brewer Street, Soho, I heard the solemn and majestic tune that starts the big pas de deux in *The Nutcracker* coming from the open doorway of a nightclub. Alas, either the opportunity or the courage to investigate was lacking, so I shall never know what use this familiar music served in that unlikely setting. But it cannot have been much more bizarre than some of the other *Nutcrackers* I have endured.

Today the ballet is exactly 100 years old, and anyone who cannot resist celebrating has the choice of three widely different productions: Birmingham Royal Ballet's spectacular version; another relying more on ingenuity than opulence by Moscow City Ballet in Paignton; and a disrespectful modern adaptation by the group Adventures In Motion Pictures as guests of Opera North in Leeds. For myself, I shall stay home and give thanks that I was not put off ballet for life by seeing the last act of *The Nutcracker* the first time I ever ventured, as a schoolboy, to a dance performance. I thought it boring, but luckily the rest of the triple bill proved more seductive.

The theory is that *The Nutcracker* is a great Christmas treat for the family and an ideal work for introducing children to ballet. False, I believe, and not just from my own experience. If only a small proportion of the thousands of children taken to *The Nutcracker* enjoyed it enough to become regular ballet-goers in consequence, they would fill all other programmes for the rest of the year — which manifestly does not happen. But this false theory does solve box-office problems for a potentially tricky period because it brings in many people who do not otherwise attend ballet.

That is why there are innumerable performances year after year, all over the world. It seems the ballet is not so often given in the former Soviet Union, presumably because the box office there was less influential. Elsewhere, *The Nutcracker* is the most frequently given of all ballets.

In the United States alone this winter, between two and three million spectators will attend at least 232 different productions. In Britain, London Contemporary Dance Theatre is the only major British company never (yet) to have danced it, and English National



Setting a Christmas trend: Arabian Dance from London Festival Ballet's influential 1950 production of *The Nutcracker*, staged by Anton Dolin and Alicia Markova

Ballet (formerly London Festival Ballet) has given a *Nutcracker* season in London and on tour every single Christmas since 1950, running through six distinct versions.

The odd thing is that, until Anton Dolin helped stage the first of those ENB productions, and George Balanchine did the same for New York City Ballet shortly afterwards, *The Nutcracker* had never caught on as a popular entertainment. When Ninette de Valois presented it at Sadler's Wells in 1934, the ballet was already more than 40 years old, yet that was the first time anyone had shown the full version outside Russia, although Pavlova, Diaghilev and others toured highlights from it.

Most of the people who saw it at Sadler's Wells were agreed that, except for those highlights, there was not much to be said for the ballet. However, it did enjoy a moderate success until war-time touring killed it off.

Into the credit balance for any traditional *Nutcracker* go a splendid duet and solos for two principal dancers, two pretty ensembles (for the snowflakes and the flowers),

and the opportunity for marvellous transformation scenes, especially the growing Christmas tree. On the other side of the scale go probably the silliest story ever invented for the theatre, without either literal or symbolic interest, characters with no consistency, an immense superfluity of mime, and a series of dances so irrelevant and trivial that to make them interesting is almost beyond human ingenuity.

The one thing that sways the balance is the music. If only Tchaikovsky had not killed himself within a year of the premiere, we would not have to put up with this nonsense. He could well have collaborated on as drastic a revision of the ballet's plot and structure as *Swan Lake* underwent in its transformation from the Moscow to the St Petersburg version, and thus left us a work more worthy of his genius. Besides, he would have gone on to write other ballets (maybe even *The Firebird* for Diaghilev), thus offering a wider choice.

As it is, *The Nutcracker* is a kind

of occupational hazard for dancers and critics: one popular star confided to me that he had nightmares of still performing it when so old that he needed a wheelchair; the critic Richard Buckle famously began a review "We are one *Nutcracker* nearer death." Producers have to find ways of making it more interesting.

'A sentimental story with the second half chopped off to make room for more dances'

What can you do with the story? It is one of Hoffman's less interesting tales, in an even more sentimental adaptation by the elder Dumas, with the second half chopped off to make room for more dances. At a Christmas party, a little girl is given a nutcracker in the form of a doll dressed as a soldier (what a

daft present for such a child); she is upset when her brother breaks the toy. Then she imagines or dreams that with her help the toy soldier wins a battle between mice and his army of toy soldiers, and then turns into a prince. Together, the prince and the girl travel through a snowy landscape to a kingdom built of sweets.

This subject was dreamed up by Vsevolozhsky, director of the Russian Imperial Theatres, and imposed by him on the composer and Marius Petipa, who prepared the libretto and would have done the choreography but fell sick, so his assistant Lev Ivanov had to oblige.

One of the most sensible solutions was that of Frederick Ashton, who omitted the party and the battle, offering just two scenes of dances a cut above the usual standard. Many producers have tried to present it as an allegory of the transition from childhood to adult feelings; Nureyev's version was the most consistent and satisfying of these. Others have gone further in the

search for originality. I have seen Drosselmeyer, who brings the nutcracker present, do a tap dance; sometimes the gift becomes a pair of ballet shoes instead. A newly issued video introduces Scrooge and Bob Cratchit as leading characters. Nijinsky danced a solo in *Swan Lake* to the Sugar Plum Fairy's music.

This year you can see the ballet set in a Victorian workhouse (by Adventures In Motion Pictures, on tour) or a 1960s New York apartment, complete with a black maid played by a man on pointe (by the Mark Morris Dance Group on BBC Television). Scottish Ballet's *Nutcracker*, one of the best, contains two polar bears (someone, somewhere, must surely have introduced reindeer), and with any luck, the *Nutcracker Suite* in the Bolshoi Ballet's Albert Hall season in January will include the little shepherdess who drags a wooden sheep behind her, like Mary with her little lamb.

Or you can listen to a recording of the music and eat mince pies. That could be best of all. Happy Christmas.

Looks before leaps?

Swan Lake/
The Dream
Covent Garden

How important are a dancer's looks? The Bolshoi ballerina Galina Ulanova danced Juliet until nearly 50, transcending her middle age into an enchanting, vital young girl on stage. But there must surely be limits to the powers of expressiveness. And if a dancer fails to convince as a commanding royal figure, do you blame his acting or his lack of inches?

Those thoughts were prompted by two of the Royal Ballet's brightest young men, Bruce Sansom and Sergiu Pobreznici. In *Swan Lake* Sansom presented a boyish Siegfried whose aura of golden youth added to the poignancy of his ultimate doom. His partnering had sophistication, his acting intelligent definition; his dancing could not be faulted, with an airy jump, firmly lifted upper carriage and, in the Black Swan coda, a spectacular *grande pirouette à la seconde*.

Yet those qualities did not work so well in Sansom's portrayal of Oberon in Ashton's *The Dream*. And I find it hard to decide whether his slight body and fresh face made him seem too lightweight for an imperious fairy king, or whether he could have invested his movements with more weight.

Pobreznici, making his debut as Oberon, is also physically slender and needs more gravitas to provide a stronger focus. He certainly gave his mime clarity and lofty authority but perhaps he could have further aided this effect by remembering to infuse dramatic colour into the passages of choreography as well, rather than treating dancing and acting as entirely separate.

By contrast, Nicola Roberts's gentle and soothing Tiana (another debut) expressed herself through steps as well as gesture. With Lesley Collier, who danced Sansom's Tiana and Odette-Odile, Roberts shares musically and impeccably judgement. Both have a quintessential English style; sturdy, they are destined to suggest utter reliability rather than dazzling virtuosity, quiet tastefulness rather than sweeping elegance.

As Puck, Anthony Bourne also gave his dancing maximum expressiveness, vividly delineating the ornamental inflections of the choreography. Through this and through his facial expression he created a wonderfully feral spirit, totally amoral and gleeful, reveling in his sharp-pointed, flying leaps.

NADINE MEISNER

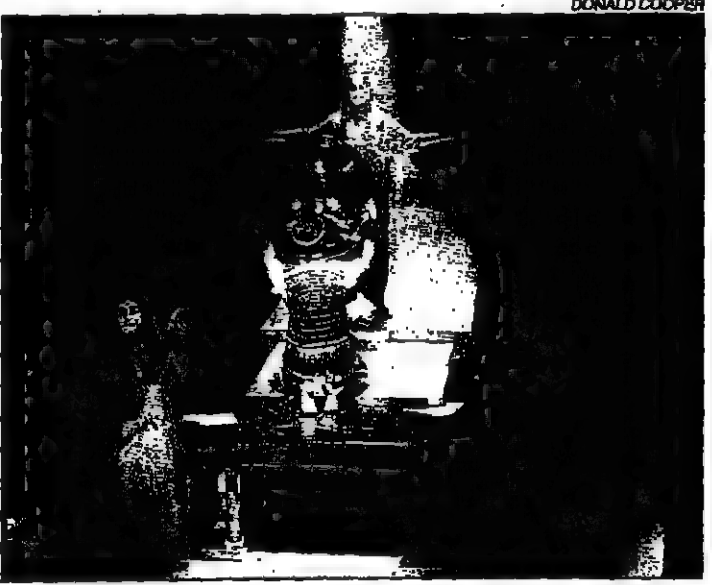
THEATRE: Benedict Nightingale on Peter Shaffer's latest play

Debate left in balance

The Gift of the Gorgon
The Pit

Peter Shaffer has spent much of his career playing variations on the same theme. On the one hand, there are people of imagination — sometimes weird, disturbing, even destructive imagination — and on the other, there are those seeking to suppress them. The well-meaning psychiatrist Dysart versus Alan Strang, the boy-protagonist of *Equus*, who ends up blinding the horses for whom he has a perversely ecstatic love. Medea Salieri versus the unruly genius Mozart in *Amadeus*. Even Lettice and Lovage, militant conservationists, versus the architectural establishment.

Shaffer's *Gift of the Gorgon* is in the same line, but even more obviously and explicitly so. Once a story Greek island comes a bright and bushy-tailed Jeremy North, an academic eager to write the posthumous biography of the playwright father he never knew. At first Judi Dench, his stepmother, refuses; but then, impressed by the



Characters step out of the lava to confront their playwright creator in Peter Shaffer's *The Gift of the Gorgon* at the Pit

boy's fervour, grudgingly agrees. He will, she says, find out things he will not wish to know. That promise gives Peter Hall's Royal Shakespeare Company production the tension that, at times, it needs.

The rest of the evening has North scribbling away in pencil (a remarkably inefficient tool but meant to differentiate him from his dad, who writes in blood-red ink) while Dench presides over exemplary flashbacks. Michael Pennington is not the most obvious casting for Edward Damsen, a playwright of wild Welsh-Russian stock and manner. The part seems custom-made for O'Toole or Oliver Reed or maybe both at once. But he does his best to be slavishly Celtic, flailing about the stage opining that he must become a secular priest, and describing how he will exalt a moribund public with his terrifyingly passionate insights.

So far so good, or goodish. It is a bit overblown, but still what we have come to expect of Shaffer, who has always been a bit of a rapturous culture-vulture. But then characters from the plays that bring Damsen public success step out of the ossified lava at the back of the stage. The Byzantine empress Irene blinds her iconoclast son, rightly in Damsen's view. Cromwell is justly punished for his offences against beauty. Proving an artist a genius is always hard, and I cannot say that Shaffer's snippets achieve it.

Never mind. The play now settles into a debate between Pennington, representing the freedom of the playwright to show horrible things and propagate terrible ideas, and Dench, representing fairness, discretion and other such dull virtues. Before long, it is between his faith in the cleansing powers of revenge and her belief he is preaching fascist nonsense. It all reaches a climax when she tries and fails to censor a play graphically advocating death for IRA terrorists.

One of Damsen's fantasies is that he is Perseus, and the flop of this piece transforms his wife in his eyes from a nourishing Athena to a paralysing Medusa, explaining Shaffer's title if not upping the quality of his debate. One of his points is that the public will accept outrageous ideas if they occur in the 7th or 17th century, but not if they are transposed to modern London or Ulster. Plenty of other ideas are touched on during the evening; and yet, as often with Shaffer's work, the feeling grows that they could be treated with more depth and distinction. But Hall's production maintains more momentum than might be expected and, whatever the caveats, there is always Judi Dench: impressed, ardent, troubled and, finally, as boiling mad as I've seen her. There at least the evening lives.

TELEVISION REVIEW: Peter Barnard salutes a current affairs flagship, scuttled after 36 years

This week should be next week, too

When Margaret Thatcher appointed herself acting director-general of commercial television the central idea was that TV-am should re-emerge blinking into the new dawn while Thames Television's rising sun logo should at last set for good. Played two, won one, lost one.

TV-am disappeared, kissed goodbye in a love letter from Thatcher to Bruce Gyngell, the station's managing director. The station was meant to survive, whereas Thames was meant to disappear, but this is the trouble with auctions: the excitement of accumulating money makes people forget the script. TV-am never investigated anything more sensational than Roland Rat's waistcoat, whereas Thames occasionally probed deeper, not that that had anything to do with the government's preferred outcome.

With Carlton about to take over the London weekday franchise from Thames, the latter is getting its retaliation in fast, if not first. Last night we were treated to a retrospective of its current affairs flagship, *This Week*, hideously entitled *That Was This Week That Was* (ITV). But mangled syntax cannot disguise the fact that the end of *This Week* seriously weakens television current affairs, especially with the BBC's *Panorama* in patchy form.

This Week ran for 36 years, apart from an eight-year name change (to *TV Eye*) when Thames attempted to take it down market. It was accused of being left-wing, and it often was. More often, it was radical, which is not the same thing. And indeed to be left-wing as in questioning of the Establishment is a different matter to being left-wing as in party politics, a distinction lost on most politicians (whichever wing they play on).

In truth the programme was simply, and vitally, a thorn in the side of comfortable assumptions, sometimes memorably so: Chris Dunkley, the *Financial Times* television critic who introduced last night's swansong, will get no argument from me in choosing Jonathan Dimbleby's 1973 report on the Ethiopian famine as the programme's high water mark. That woke us up to awful misfor-

tune as few other single programmes have done.

But *This Week* never forgot that the quid pro quo for a peak-time slot was the need to grab the audience and hold it. One week the producers were backstage with the Rolling Stones, the better to take the viewers down the back alleys of the working classes the next. All the while reputations were being made: Dimbleby, Desmond Wilcox, Robert Kee, Ludovic Kennedy, Peter Taylor.

Carlton is said to be planning a successor that will tackle "issues", a snifty word which suggests we are in for "on the other hand" television of the kind favoured by John Birt at the BBC. Well, *This Week* tackled issues, but from the standpoint of the people at the heart of them. That did not always make for "balance" but it did make for some memorable and important television. I think that matters more than auctioneers collecting cash on behalf of the Treasury. But journalists: what do we know?



Jonathan Dimbleby worked on *This Week* from 1972-78 and 1986-88: his 1973 Ethiopian famine report was a high point

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RUGBY UNION

Forward planning is Cooke's recipe for continued progress

By PETER BILLS

GEOFF Cooke yesterday forecast another decade of success for the England rugby union team. Cooke, the England team manager who will also manage the British Isles on their tour of New Zealand next summer, said he had been enormously encouraged by the emergence of quality players from the divisional championship.

"I am extremely encouraged by what is around," he said. "This is by no means just experienced players; we have a crop of youngsters coming through which give us a great deal of optimism for the next ten years of English rugby. We will have to shoot ourselves in the foot not to continue being successful."

"That does not mean we

won't lose the odd game, but I don't see England losing many games in the next few years. We are in a strong position and it is up to us to stay there."

Cooke revealed some of the strengths and weaknesses he and his fellow selectors had identified during the divisional championship. They believe there is enormous potential among several young forwards, especially at prop. "Clark, Mallett and Crompton have emerged in the South West side, and Garforth is another to have made an impression. They are excellent prospects," he said.

In the second row, the selectors regard Martin Johnson, of Leicester, as an England player of the very near

future, probably filling the place Wade Dooley will almost certainly vacate at the end of this season, with Martin Bayfield moving to the middle of the lineout.

Cooke considers that England are spoiled for choice in the back row. Tim Rodber, of Northampton, who is already capped, still has work to do, he said, but his progress has been satisfactory, while even younger talents like Laurence Dallaglio, of Wasps, and Tony Diprose, of Saracens, are outstanding prospects.

But England do have possible weaknesses outside the scrum. Both half-back positions, after Morris and Andrew Barnes, are a source of concern, and the selectors hope to see the young Northampton player, Dawson, by necessity a centre for his club of late, settling down at scrum half, where he has represented the Midlands promisingly.

Cooke said: "Fly half is the bigger worry. David Pears, of Harlequins, offers some sort of security for the future while Challinor, Grayson and Matthews are players we would hope will also come through."

"We think there is considerable talent at centre and on the wings in players like de Glanville, Damian Hopley and John Sleighthorne, the young wing from the North."

But full back, after Jonathan Webb, was the biggest weakness in English rugby, Cooke said.

He would not prophesy a third successive grand slam for England. He said that France, who England play first in the five nations' championship, on January 16, have chosen quality players who English observers regard as outstanding performers. "If they get themselves together, they will be a stiff obstacle, even though the match is at Twickenham," Cooke said.



Testing the waters: Hatfield and his crew try out their Whitbread race yacht on the Solent yesterday

Crew make most of abilities

By BARRY PICKTHALL

CHRISTMAS came early for James Hatfield, a yachtsman with a hole in his heart, and his crew of disabled sailors yesterday when they took delivery in Southampton of their 60ft yacht to compete in the Whitbread Round the World Race next year.

The Rob Humphreys design is the first British yacht built for the race and there was no disguising Hatfield's eagerness to commence the training of his team. "She's fantastic. I took the helm for a short period on the way over from Cowes and she handled superbly. We've got a potential winner here," he said.

Initial funding for the yacht came from a £1 million grant provided by the Foundation for Sports and Arts, but a further £1 million is required before the race starts from Southampton in September.

Hatfield's initial squad of crew members includes an amputee, someone who has polio, two who are partially sighted and one who is deaf, as well as an asthmatic and a dyslexic. Another had a lobotomy, as a result of a mugging.

"We're looking to see if we can get a vibrating pager to get Don Street's attention. He's the deaf one among us," Hatfield said. "During this year's round Britain race, we hit him with a winch handle,

but the new ones are so light, he would never feel them."

Humour, coupled with a determination to prove the sceptics wrong, are this crew's strong suits. "I read in magazines of people questioning whether Lawrence Smith will get a boat and provide Britain with a strong Whitbread entry. Well, by the time he does, we will have completed four Atlantic crossings. That's 20,000 miles of blue-water experience. We want to win and have a boat that can do so. We also have the time to train ourselves, so the result is down to what happens out on the ocean."

The skipper's first battle is to convince insurers at Lloyd's that the team is at no more risk than any other. "They want to charge us a £10,000 premium each time we go overseas. Insurance forms are so negative towards the disabled," Hatfield said. "They ask if you have had heart trouble, cancer and other problems, but there is never a box to tick if you are cured. Insurance is a problem. Hatfield has still to work out, but there was no question yesterday of compromising his preparation trials. "It is no good us day sailing in the Solent. We have got to get the experience of crossing oceans — and we will," he said. It is this gritty determination that the team will need in the months ahead.

Howard loses place on referees' panel

By DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

FRED Howard, England's most experienced referee, has been dropped from the Rugby Football Union (RFU) international panel, which was named yesterday. The omission of Howard, 44, in favour of another Liverpoolian, David Matthews, is the only change from last season.

Thus two of Britain's most capable referees, Howard and Clive Norling, of Wales, will not be seen at the highest level this season, although Norling's absence has more to do with injury and illness than form. The RFU decision concludes a nine-year run for Howard, during which he handled 20 internationals.

"The appointments are made on the basis of performance over the last 12 months and particularly over the first half of this season," Robert

Horne, the chairman of the RFU referees' committee, said.

Tony Spreadbury, of Somerset, becomes the most experienced member of the team, alongside Ed Morrison, of Bristol, and Matthews, who will handle the A international on December 28 between Ireland and Scotland. Morrison has been awarded England's only five nations' championship appointment, Scotland against Ireland.

INVENTIONS APPOINTMENTS: Jan 16, England v France (Scotland), Scotland v Ireland (England), Feb 6, Wales v England (France), France v Scotland (Wales), Feb 20, Ireland v France (Scotland), Scotland v Wales (France), March 6, Wales v Ireland (Australia), England v Scotland (Ireland), March 20, France v Wales (Ireland), Ireland v England (Australia).

Richard Lee, the All Black prop, has had his nine-month suspension for eye gouging reduced to six months by the New Zealand RFU.

Launder promotes sport for all

Since introducing organised games to the world in the nineteenth century, British sport has itself made some mistakes, one of which, throughout the first half of the twentieth century, was to undervalue the importance of coaching. The old breed of Corinthian amateur, and even some of the great professionals from between the wars such as Stanley Matthews, like to think that excellence happens spontaneously: a God-determined gift.

That is true only in the tiny minority of instances. Matthews and Bradman achieved what they did partly through thousands of hours of practice. To be good, as opposed to great, the short cut is often intelligent coaching. This was vividly apparent in the recent talk by Alan Launder, "A Place for Everyone", at the conference of the British Institute of Sports Coaching.

Formerly a schoolmaster and coach at Chalfonts in Buckinghamshire and now a residential coach at the University of South Australia, Launder has brought to his job a unique approach. Sport, he reasons, has no meaning in itself. What is the value of dunking a basketball through a hoop? The value of sport is, or should be, what it teaches us about ourselves. Sport, as de Coubertin

David Miller looks at a creative approach to coaching that rewards persistence and patience and produces exceptional results

declared, is not only about winning; it is also, as Launder says, about the feel and the memory of a new cricket ball in your hand; the scent of morning dew on an autumn playing field; the sensation and satisfaction of a tee shot that only you experienced.

Because this self-revelation ought not to be confined only to those who demonstrate an early natural ability, Launder has always insisted that his coaching sessions are available to all development can emerge at any stage, unexpectedly.



Nunn: success story

"Children often have no idea what they are good at," he says, "and they sometimes don't like to try because they don't want to take the risk." He has therefore always created a coaching environment in which if a child bothered to turn up, he or she was included. It is a policy that has produced some remarkable results.

After stimulating a generation of cross-country runners at Chalfonts, that, from a single school, was capable of challenging for the international county championship, Launder started applying his technique in Australia. Simon Arkell, the pole vault winner in the last Commonwealth Games in Auckland, was a conspicuous example of Launder's success.

As a youngster, Arkell had failed after several weeks to clear even a rudimentary two metres and Launder, even with his level of tolerance, privately wished the boy would go away. Arkell went off on a cross-country canoe expedition... and came back still wanting to be a pole vaulter. Coach and pupil duly persisted.

Kate Farrow, who won the

javelin bronze medal in Auckland, began her competitive career with the unpromising conversational label of No-Hope-Kate. She, too, persisted. Launder admits there are limitations to his non-elite policy in the midst of a preference of elite programmes. "It can work well up to a fairly high level," he says, "but perhaps not to the very top."

Among his other proteges are Sean Carlin, eighth in the hammer in Barcelona this year and a Commonwealth champion, and Glynis Nunn, the heptathlon winner at Los Angeles in 1984.

"Society in the Western world may be on the verge of collapse," Launder reflects. Sport helps to create the society we want to live in and offers jobs and opportunities in a time of despair. How will history judge coaches in 500 years' time: as trainers of gladiators, or as guardians of society, not just producing champions but helping to improve people's lives?"

His aim has been to create an environment at all times in which everyone supports each other. "If you try to attempt high standards at too young an age, you are likely to lose your way," he says. "Somewhere along the line, I like to feel that I've touched upon the lives of those who have wanted to be involved."

NETBALL

England select shooters

SHOOTERS and Essex women dominate the England squad for the World Games in The Hague next July. England finished third behind New Zealand and Australia at the last Games in Karlsruhe, Germany, in 1989 (Louise Taylor writes).

From 67 hopefuls put through their paces against the Australian Institute of Sport, a squad of 15 has been selected by Liz Broomhead, the England coach. For the first time in years, there are no Surrey players.

The final 15 includes two who will be representing their country for the first time — Leigh MacMann, 25, from Kent, and Lorraine Law, 28, of Essex. Three former England under-21 players have finally earned promotion —

Rachel Pockley, 25, Lisa Topliss, 22, and Justine Saunders, 26.

Broomhead said: "I'm excited at the versatility of the squad. We've gone for variety in the shooting circle and have tall shooters, moving shooters and solid shooters."

Bill Alexander, 38, has qualified as the first male international umpire in England. A school teacher, he has been umpiring since 1982.

Up until 1991, rules debarred men from becoming international netball umpires.

ENGLAND SQUAD: 8 Pottery (Essex), 9 Foster (Essex), 10 Law (Essex), 11 MacMann (Kent), 12 Topliss (Dorset), 13 Pockley (Hampshire), 14 Topliss (Dorset), 15 Law (Essex), 16 MacMann (Kent), 17 Foster (Essex), 18 MacMann (Kent), 19 Law (Essex), 20 Foster (Essex), 21 MacMann (Kent), 22 Topliss (Dorset), 23 Law (Essex), 24 Foster (Essex), 25 MacMann (Kent), 26 Topliss (Dorset), 27 Law (Essex), 28 Foster (Essex), 29 MacMann (Kent), 30 Topliss (Dorset), 31 Law (Essex), 32 Foster (Essex), 33 MacMann (Kent), 34 Topliss (Dorset), 35 Law (Essex), 36 Foster (Essex), 37 MacMann (Kent), 38 Topliss (Dorset), 39 Law (Essex), 40 Foster (Essex), 41 MacMann (Kent), 42 Topliss (Dorset), 43 Law (Essex), 44 Foster (Essex), 45 MacMann (Kent), 46 Topliss (Dorset), 47 Law (Essex), 48 Foster (Essex), 49 MacMann (Kent), 50 Topliss (Dorset), 51 Law (Essex), 52 Foster (Essex), 53 MacMann (Kent), 54 Topliss (Dorset), 55 Law (Essex), 56 Foster (Essex), 57 MacMann (Kent), 58 Topliss (Dorset), 59 Law (Essex), 60 Foster (Essex), 61 MacMann (Kent), 62 Topliss (Dorset), 63 Law (Essex), 64 Foster (Essex), 65 MacMann (Kent), 66 Topliss (Dorset), 67 Law (Essex).

SPORTS LETTERS

Danger of tackle from behind MCC could trim the costs

From Mr Steve Corbett

Sir, More worrying than the use of the elbow in football is a disturbingly familiar sight of a tackler from behind. This type of challenge was all but eliminated in the early Eighties by a formal application of the laws by referees acting under the instructions of the Football Association.

Its reappearance can be witnessed more often than the use of the elbow and, although the injuries inflicted are not usually as serious, the tackle is designed to intimidate rather than injure.

Referees and linesmen must be vigilant in spotting the difference between the legitimate challenge and the tackle which goes right through the player before playing the ball.

The dispute over the performance of some referees seems to involve their apparent reluctance to book players.

The only way to eliminate the illegal tackle from behind is to punish offenders severely, which means strict use of red and yellow cards for all miscreants.

Yours sincerely, STEVE CORBETT, 62 Coverts Road, Claygate, Surrey.

From Mr Darren Bailey

Sir, The recent high-profile acquittals of footballer Gary Blissett and rugby player Gary Rees on charges of causing

grievous bodily harm to opponents reflect the difficulties faced by the Crown Prosecution Service in seeking to satisfy the criminal burden of proof in the context of sporting encounters.

Therefore, as the CPS ponders these difficulties, it is possible that such prosecutions may be less frequent in the future than recent trends might have suggested. This, however, will not eliminate unlawful action perpetrated on the sports field.

As an FA coach, I am concerned by the increase in litigation, both criminal and civil, arising from incidents in the course of sporting encounters.

However, as a lawyer, I have to acknowledge the supremacy of the general law, and I foresee a regrettable increase in civil actions where competitors who are the subject of alleged on-field assaults pursue civil claims.

In these, the less onerous burden of proof is based upon the balance of probabilities, and the injured party can benefit from an award of compensation not only in respect of the injury itself, but also for financial losses.

Yours faithfully, D. M. BAILEY, Sports Law Unit, Shroton & Harrison (Solicitors), Regents Gate, Crown Street, Reading, Berkshire.

From Mr Ernest Green

Sir, Why does the MCC special meeting in January about the England tour selection (report, December 2) need to cost as much as £17,000?

Mailing and printing, yes, but what about second-class mail and, instead of expensive envelopes, a sheet of paper with a sticky seal after the paper has been folded?

And why all this cost in hiring an expensive hall when Hyde Park will do, or even Olympia, should there be concern that members might get wet? Many will say that they should not be involved with cricket if they are worried about getting wet. A few loudspeakers and a few strategically placed ballot boxes are all that are needed.

I remain, Sir, with regard for the objects of the MCC, cricket and its promotion at home and abroad, and not wastage of good money. Yours faithfully, ERNEST GREEN, Suite 57, 105 Hallam Street, W1.

From Mr Bill Pullen
Sir, Even more justified than David Gower in complaining

about his omission from England's cricket tour to India is Jack Russell. One bad Test match when he wasn't feeling well after the first day, and out he goes.

The season's first-class batting averages showed him on 42.82, three places above Alec Stewart and not far behind Richard Blakey, who is not remotely in his class as a wicketkeeper. Whilst not so successful in Tests, Russell averaged more than at least one specialist batsman who was retained for India.

Having seen Russell score rapidly last season in one-day games and run-chases, I feel it is pure fallacy to say he cannot bat in this type of cricket. Vice-captaincy of the England A tour of Australia is scant consolation. If I had been he, I'd have told the selectors to "forget it" and got on with my painting in the belief I could earn more that way.

That Russell didn't say a lot for his loyalty, which has been abused by the selectors. Yours etc, BILL PULLEN, Grettton Hill Farm, Winchcombe, Gloucestershire.

Trout records

From the Director of The Salmon & Trout Association
Sir, This association welcomes the constructive comments by your fishing correspondent, Brian Clarke, in his article on trout records (December 9).

In particular, the idea that records for Atlantic salmon stocked into stillwaters should be outlawed will be given serious consideration, although I have to point out that there are strains of genuine landlocked salmon, *Salmo salar* seabago, which have recently been introduced to this country.

Yours faithfully, C. W. POUPARD, Director, The Salmon & Trout Association, Fishmongers' Hall, London Bridge, EC4.

European reality

From Mr Patrick Brain

Sir, As a confirmed Euro-sceptic, I found myself recently questioning the extent to which my own perception of Europe is based not on a rational view of Europe as it is now, but on impressions fashioned in my early education just after the second world war.

What sparked this bout of self-appraisal was a conversation I overheard between my eight-year-old son and a friend of his, in a heated exchange as to which club was presently at the head of the

football league in England. The one was adamant that Blackburn Rovers were the current league leaders, while the other argued with some vehemence that the leaders were AC Milan.

Yours sincerely, PATRICK J. BRAIN, Sugworth Farm, Sugworth Lane, Radley, Oxfordshire.

Sports Letters may be sent by fax to 071-782 5046. They should include a daytime telephone number.

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page 36

BLASTULA

(b) An embryo, typically composed of cells arranged in a sphere enclosing the blastocoel, from the Greek *blastos* a sprout + *a* diminutive suffix: "When the sea-urchin's egg has divided into about 1,000 cells these form a little hollow ball or vesicle known as the blastula."

FIZZIG

(c) A police informer in Oz slang, also *plizzig*, from 1895: "We described him as a fizzig — an interesting word that means a grass, an informer." Cf an earlier sense, silly or flirtatious young woman.

GLOIRE DE DIJON

(a) A yellow hybrid tea rose, "glory of Dijon", first exhibited in Paris in 1854. Meredith: "I want you to see my Marie Blooming. She is a fall and perfect rose. You know the Gloire de Dijon?" *Lady Chatterley's Lover*: "She still lay naked and faintly golden like a Gloire de Dijon rose in the bed."

CONSTATIVE

(b) Referring to a use of the aorist tense, indicating that the action denoted has taken place, rather than emphasising its initiation or completion, translation of the German *konstatierend*, from the Latin *constatus*, from the participle stem of *constare*: "The constative use of the Greek aorist, which refers to past actions simply as having occurred."

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

Despite the reduced material white gives mate: 1 Nd7+ Ka8 2 Rc5! Rxd7 (otherwise 3 Ra5 is mate) 3 Rc8 mate.

Taylor questions timing of Lineker's retirement



Taylor: optimistic

Graham Taylor, as he reflected on the most inconvenient of results in Istanbul and looked forward to the most crucial year of his England managerial reign, found himself stuck with an irrelevance. The topic of discussion was Gary Lineker, who will play no part in the World Cup campaign.

In suggesting that Lineker retired in the summer prematurely, as Taylor did yesterday, he is running the risk of fanning the flames of his unseemly public row. He chose to speak out after Holland's victory in Turkey, because he felt it was time "to put the record straight".

He revealed that when he took over from Bobby Robson

two years ago he gained the impression that the captain he appointed was not looking to extend his international career beyond 1992. Once Lineker had assured England of a place in the European championship finals by scoring the equaliser in Poland 13 months ago, the intention was confirmed.

Taylor believes that Lineker chose too early to hang up his golden England boots. "How can anyone decide to retire from international football before they are 30?" he asked. Lineker reached that age in October 1990.

"I respect the player's decision, but I find it strange."

Having watched Gullit and Rijkaard emerge from self-



STUART JONES
Football Correspondent

imposed Dutch exile on Wednesday night, Taylor went on to claim that it set a regrettable example. "You hope that younger players do not see international football as something to retire from," he said. "Who would want to retire? It is over soon enough anyway."

Taylor feels he was drawn into the dispute by John Holmes, Lineker's agent. "I was most reluctant to get

involved but I had no choice but to rebut the personal criticism from him," Taylor said. "As far as I am aware, I have never had any problems with Gary."

Yet Lineker, substituted towards the end of England's closing European championship tie against Sweden, recently broke his own silence on the controversial incident. He expressed the thought that Taylor's action, which

brought to an ignominious end his international career, may have been based on more than mere tactics.

"It was not personal," Taylor once more insisted. "But if this continues, it will be hard to convince people otherwise. There seems to be something building up to make it personal. I never saw it that way and every time Gary was taken off or brought on, he responded like a good professional."

"It is unfortunate that this has cropped up because I have to prepare mentally for a very important year."

Ironically, his outlook would have brightened considerably on Wednesday had the Turks been blessed with a forward of Lineker's pred-

atory nature. They created more than sufficient openings to have crushed the less than redoubtable Dutch morale and perhaps even knocked them out of contention.

From his vantage point, in the rain-swept stadium, Taylor watched a tie in which one team had the chances and the other took them.

Group two has thus developed into a competition between four nations for the two qualifying places, as seemed predictable when the draw was made. As was apparent then, England's destiny will be determined largely in the last few months of this season.

The fixture against Holland

at Wembley in April promises to be particularly significant and Taylor saw enough during the game in Turkey to cling on to optimism.

"I always felt we could score against them [Holland]," he said after their defensive vulnerability had been confirmed, "but they will be lifted by their first win under their new manager."

He was denied the services of van Basten and Bergkamp, who were injured. They could yet damage Taylor's ambition of leading England to the World Cup finals in the United States. During a week in which he has been verbally duelling with his own most reliable scorer, the prospect seems especially poignant.

GOLF

Birdies fly in encouraging start by Faldo

FROM MITCHELL PLATT, GOLF CORRESPONDENT IN MONTEGO BAY

NICK Faldo made an encouraging start as many of his rivals struggled in the first round of the Johnnie Walker world championship at Tryall yesterday. Faldo launched his challenge with three birdies in his first seven holes, and he held a share of the early lead with the Australian, Craig Parry, who was out in 33.

But Fred Couples, the defending champion and Faldo's playing partner, was one of several to find the uncompromising rough a severe examination on their patience. Couples drove into the thigh-high grass at the 4th. He failed to move the ball with his first swish, moved it two yards with his next and finally recovered to the fairway with his next. He marked an eight on his card.

The Masters champion was not alone in having a horror-story to relate. Sandy Lyle, Paul Azinger and Robert Allenby had sevens; Christy O'Connor Jr and Steve Elkington took eights.

Brad Faxon, of the United States, was quite literally at sixes (at the 7th and 9th) and sevens (10th) and went one over the eight when he took nine at the 8th.

Yet the cream of world golf had conditions in their favour with the wind a mere zephyr compared to the gale-force blast that drove most to distraction a year ago. The organisers had also ordered the rough to be cut back, widening the driving area by more than 15 yards in places. Severiano Ballesteros was struggling to keep his equilibrium from the moment he took five at the short 3rd where

his tee-shot spun back into the deep rough. He hacked the ball over the grass and took another three to get down.

The Spaniard took three puts at the 6th and he drove out of bounds for a six at the 8th. Out in 40, he must have been wondering why he had interrupted a prolonged holiday at home to compete here. He finished in 76.

Ballesteros had been asked by the Spanish press on Wednesday his opinion of Faldo. He informed them that he felt no admiration for Faldo because "he needs to win more to get on my level".

Faldo, however, put himself very much in the driving seat as he remained in command to the turn, which he reached in 32. He enjoys nothing more than an examining course, and he kept his head while others around him were losing theirs.

Mark Roe, who earned his place in the tournament by winning the Lancôme Trophy in September, compiled a creditable 71, one over par, with which he shared the early lead with Peter O'Malley, of Australia.

Roe began by holing from 40 feet for a birdie at the 1st. He drove into a ditch to drop a shot at the 4th, but hit a four-iron to 15 feet for a two at the next.

Out in 35, he dropped a shot at the 11th where he missed the green to the left. But he played the last seven holes in level par, and struck the ball with increasing authority. He holed from eight feet for a birdie at the 16th, but took three puts from the back of the green at the next.



Poles apart: Roger-Yves Bost winning the Christmas Pudding Stakes yesterday

EQUESTRIANISM

Whitaker's pace is too hot to handle

By JENNY MACARTHUR

MICHAEL Whitaker and Everest My Messieur, the winners of the Derby at Wembley in October, were back in the winners' enclosure at Olympia yesterday after a stirring performance in the Christmas Pudding Stakes.

Unlike Wembley, where their win was overshadowed by the death of the Swiss horse, Sir Arkay, at The Bank, the class yesterday — a power and speed competition — was a fitting showcase for the partnership.

The field included several of Europe's leading horses, including Abbeville la Silla, ridden by the Dutchman, Jan Tops, and Arch Countryman, ridden by David Broome.

Whitaker jumped nimbly around the speed section of the course in 20.19sec. He then sat and watched as successive riders tried in vain to match his time.

Roger-Yves Bost, of France, already the winner of two competitions at Olympia, produced a faultless display on President Papillon but was more than one second slower than Whitaker.

The next threat came from Nick Skelton but it was not his day. Turning sharply after the wall, his horse, Everest Major Wager, slipped on to his side.

Whitaker's win underlines the versatility of My Messieur, who he has been riding for three years. "You can jump him in anything and he'll always have a chance of winning," he said.

RESULTS: Modern Security Systems Christmas Pudding Stakes: 1, Michael Whitaker (GB), 20.19; 2, Roger-Yves Bost (F), 21.74; 3, Nick Skelton (GB), 22.01; 4, Jan Tops (D), 22.01; 5, David Broome (GB), 22.01; 6, Arch Countryman (GB), 22.01; 7, Abbeville la Silla (D), 22.01; 8, Everest My Messieur (GB), 22.01; 9, President Papillon (F), 22.01; 10, Everest Major Wager (F), 22.01; 11, Nick Skelton (GB), 22.01; 12, Jan Tops (D), 22.01; 13, David Broome (GB), 22.01; 14, Arch Countryman (GB), 22.01; 15, Abbeville la Silla (D), 22.01; 16, Everest My Messieur (GB), 22.01; 17, President Papillon (F), 22.01; 18, Everest Major Wager (F), 22.01; 19, Nick Skelton (GB), 22.01; 20, Jan Tops (D), 22.01; 21, David Broome (GB), 22.01; 22, Arch Countryman (GB), 22.01; 23, Abbeville la Silla (D), 22.01; 24, Everest My Messieur (GB), 22.01; 25, President Papillon (F), 22.01; 26, Everest Major Wager (F), 22.01; 27, Nick Skelton (GB), 22.01; 28, Jan Tops (D), 22.01; 29, David Broome (GB), 22.01; 30, Arch Countryman (GB), 22.01; 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BBC1

- 6.00 Cerebra** (99168) **6.30 Breakfast News** begins with *Business Breakfast* until 6.55 when Laurie Mayer and Tanya Sillman present regional news and topical reports with regular business, sport, weather, and travel bulletins (40818418).
- 9.05 Play** Robert Kilroy-Gill chairs a studio discussion on a topical subject (2705592) **9.45 Ross King** Game show (8777586).
- 10.00 News**, regional news and weather (3509692) **10.05 Playdays** For the very young (8115929).
- 10.30 Good Morning**... with Anne and Nick. Weekend magazine presented by Anne Diamond and Nick Owen (b). With News (Cerebra) and weather at 11.00 and 12.00 (4868760).
- 12.15 Pebble Mill** Alan Titchmarsh introduces the final of the annual "A Song For Christmas" competition for children (s) (6483944) **12.55 Regional News** and weather (8551702).
- 1.00 One O'Clock News** with Philip Hayton. (Cerebra) Weather (20692) **1.30 Neighbours**. (Cerebra) (s) (2195876) **1.50 Eldorado** (r). (Cerebra) (s) (37252).
- 2.20 Going for Gold**. The final of the general knowledge quiz with European contestants. A beaming Henry Kelly introduces the eight vying to win a luxury holiday (s). (3932012) **2.45 The Flying Doctors**. Medical drama set in the Australian outback (7513370).
- 3.30 Cartoon** (507692) **3.45 Bump** (r). (Cerebra) (s) (7513370). Tales narrated by Victoria Wood (5411091) **3.55 Superbody**. Law in the series exploring the human body (6053499) **4.10 Chipmunks**. Go to the Movies (s) (864215) **4.35 Take Two**. Sarah Greene introduces a junior version of Channel 4's *Right to Reply* (s) (5718215).
- 5.00 Newsworld** (7332465) **5.05 Byker Grove**. Children's drama serial set in and around a Geordie youth centre. (Cerebra) (6552663).
- 5.35 Neighbours** (r). (Cerebra) (s) (225470). Northern Ireland: Inside Ulster.
- 6.00 Six O'Clock News** with Peter Sissons and Moira Stuart. (Cerebra) Weather (20692).
- 6.30 Regional News Magazines** (857). Northern Ireland: Neighbours **7.00 Eldorado**. (Cerebra) (s) (3215).
- 7.30 Don't Wait Up**. George Layton's amiable comedy starring Nigel Havers and Tony Britton as father and son doctors (r). (Cerebra) (741). Northern Ireland: Sportsense.



Pantomime dame: Esther Rantzen with Ken Tossy (8.00pm)

- 8.00 Hearts of Gold**. A Christmas edition in which Esther Rantzen and Mike Smith are joined by children's programme presenters and 250 youngsters on a day trip to Lapland to meet Father Christmas. (Cerebra) (s) (2078).
- 9.00 Nine O'Clock News** with Marilyn Lewis. (Cerebra) Regional news and weather (3692).
- 9.30 Son of the Morning Star**. The second and final part of the drama series following the events that led to the massacre of General Custer's forces at the battle of Little Big Horn. Starring Gary Cole as Custer, Rodney A. Grant as Crazy Horse and Philip Red Crow as Sitting Bull. (Cerebra) (s) (204383). Northern Ireland: Anderson on the Box 10.25 Son of the Morning Star.
- 11.05 Terry Wogan's Friday Night**. Guests include Tony Slattery, Dan Aykroyd and Steve Coogan (s) (445012).
- 11.45 International Showjumping** from the Grand Hall, Olympia. The featured event is the Everest Christmas Cakes Stakes (s) (711892). The featured event is the Everest Christmas Cakes Stakes (s) (711892). The featured event is the Everest Christmas Cakes Stakes (s) (711892).
- 12.35am Paradise**. Western series starring Lee Horsley and Sigrid Thornton (8598548). Northern Ireland: 12.40-1.30 Showjumping **1.20 Weather** (3317800).

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BBC2

- 8.00 Breakfast News** (5036128) **8.15 Westminster** (5127215)
- 9.00 Film: Tail in the Saddle** (1944, b/w) starring John Wayne and Ella Raines. Sprightly western directed by Edwin L. Marin (5028363).
- 10.20 Film: Affair with a Stranger** (1953, b/w) starring Victor Mature and Jean Simmons. Drama, told in flashback, about the break-up of a marriage between a successful playwright and his beautiful wife. Directed by Roy Rowland (7550586).
- 11.50 Michael Barry's Choice Cuts**. Vegetable recipes (5085321).
- 12.00 Look Stranger**. A profile of Bill Abernethy, a professional pearl fisherman (r) (6150789).
- 12.20 The Royal Institution Christmas Lectures** (r) (s) (2846789) **1.20 Pingu** (s) (4015553) **1.35 Another War, Another Peace**. Lost in the series about life in the 1940s and 1950s (7272670).
- 2.00 News** and weather (8903789) **2.05 Sport on Friday**. Golf: the first round of the Johnnie Walker World Championship in Jamaica; Showjumping from Olympia; and Motorcros: the Transatlantic Supercross from Birmingham (763654).
- 4.00 Catchword**. Game for wordsmiths hosted by Paul Cole (s) (470).
- 4.30 Behind the Headlines**. Shyma Perera with media and showbusiness news (54) **5.00 Delta Smith's Christmas**. A guide to cooking at Christmas (r). (Cerebra) (6321) **5.30 Top Gear**. Includes a report from the 24 hours Le Mans race (r) (s) (234).
- 6.00 Saturday**. Classic pop series (r) (Cerebra) (67645).
- 6.25 The Man From UNCLE**. Spoof secret service adventures starring Robert Vaughn and David McCallum (r) (Cerebra) (64949).
- 7.15 Dr Who**. Last of the five-part adventure starring Jon Pertwee (r) (519129) **7.40 What the Papers Say** presented by Isobel Hilton of *The Independent* (796499) **7.55 Prisoners of Conscience**. With Bill Morris, general secretary of the TGMU (2365316).
- 8.00 Public Eye**. Home and Away. Jenny Cuffe reports on the elderly who have slipped through council and welfare loopholes and are not being properly looked after (2505).
- 8.30 The Living Garden**. Geoff Hamilton looks at ways of working with nature. (Cerebra) (1012).
- 9.00 The Feast of Tenshundun Heads in the Sand**.
● **CHOICE**. The English translation of the biography of Leni Riefenstahl is the peg for a reassessment of *Triumph of the Will*, her notorious film about the 1934 Nazi party rally in Nuremberg. Brilliantly lit, composed and edited, it is striking example of cinematic art. At the same time it is a blatant and mesmerising celebration of an evil ideology. Riefenstahl has always claimed that she was merely a filmmaker with no interest in politics. None of tonight's contributors, who include the *Charlie* of film director Hugh Hudson and Professor George Stanner who writes for a Sunday. But there is still admiration for the young Riefenstahl's extraordinary use of film technique. There is, curiously, no word from Riefenstahl herself, now 90 and working as a photographer in Munich. A showing of the film follows (195505).
- 12.05am Film: Triumph of the Will** (1935, b/w). A rare television airing for Leni Riefenstahl's remarkable celebration of the 1934 Nuremberg rally (457345) **1.30 Self Exposure**. Family Gathering. Lisa Vesel, a Japanese-American, explores her family's history (5573722) **2.30 Weather** (8575557).



Poking fun at 1932: Hisslop, Dayston and Merton (10.00pm)

- 10.00 Have I Got News For You**. Ian Hisslop and Paul Merton are joined by Stephen Fry and Frank Skinner. With Angus Dayston (s) (31147).
- 10.30 Newsnight** presented by Peter Snow (762031).
- 11.15 Prisoners of Conscience**. Introduced by Clare Francis (100012).
- 11.20 Late Show Special**.
Riefenstahl is the peg for a reassessment of *Triumph of the Will*, her notorious film about the 1934 Nazi party rally in Nuremberg. Brilliantly lit, composed and edited, it is striking example of cinematic art. At the same time it is a blatant and mesmerising celebration of an evil ideology. Riefenstahl has always claimed that she was merely a filmmaker with no interest in politics. None of tonight's contributors, who include the *Charlie* of film director Hugh Hudson and Professor George Stanner who writes for a Sunday. But there is still admiration for the young Riefenstahl's extraordinary use of film technique. There is, curiously, no word from Riefenstahl herself, now 90 and working as a photographer in Munich. A showing of the film follows (195505).
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ITV LONDON

- 6.00 TV-am** (5466079)
- 9.25 Keynotes**. Music game show hosted by Alastair Divali (6642586).
- 9.55 Regional News** (9124673)
- 10.00 Film: Babes in Toyland** (1931). A Disney fantasy adventure about a wicked man trying to disrupt a wedding in Toyland by enlisting the bridegroom and marrying the bride. With Ray Bolger, Tommy Sands, Tommy Kirk, Ed Wynn and Annette Funicello. Directed by Jack Donaghy (57394383) **11.55 Regional News** (5560234).
- 12.00 Cartoon** featuring Goofy (1382879) **12.10 Rainbow**. Early learning series (r) (6143459).
- 12.30 Lunchtime News** with Dermot Mulroney and Sonia Ruselet. (Oracle) Weather (1063982) **1.05 Regional News** (4017185).
- 1.15 News** and weather (8903789) **1.30 Australian Family Drama**. (Cerebra) (475437) **1.45 Who's the Boss?** American comedy series starring Tony Danza (474708).
- 2.15 Highway to Heaven**. Jonathan, the earthbound apprentice angel, helps a store's Father Christmas after he is arrested for protesting about the shop selling toy weapons. Starring Michael London (7052147).
- 3.10 ITN News headlines** (7505992) **3.15 Regional News headlines** (7504969) **3.20 BBC2 Medical drama** set in a suburban Australia (3422293).
- 3.50 Scooby Doo**. Cartoon (5042926) **4.05 Cartoon** featuring Twenty Two (7010789) **4.15 Victor and Hugo**. Animated misadventures of two incompetent comics. With the voice of David Jason (8638554) **4.40 Knightmare**. Last in the series of the medieval dungeon game and four schoolboys from Middlesex pit their wits against the electronic wizardry (5702036) **5.05 Cartoon** with Porly Pig (2491654).
- 5.15 LWT News** and weather (8194708)
- 5.40 Early Evening News** with John Suchet. (Oracle) Weather (127499)
- 6.00 Home and Away** (r). (Oracle) (673).
- 6.30 Park High**. Last part of the fly-on-the-wall look at life in a suburban comprehensive school. As Christmas nears the headmaster prepares to make a grand exit with a spectacular performance in the school pant (626).
- 7.00 Through the Keyhole** presented by David Frost. Lady Grossman gives the clues to the identity of a mysterious homeowner to guests Alan Titchmarsh, Eve Pollard and Doc Cox. (Oracle) (2883).
- 7.30 Coronation Street**. After the ball, Martin Platt wakes up with more than a hangover (Oracle).
- 8.00 Gone to the Sun**. Last in the comedy-drama sequel to *Gone to the Dogs*, starring Alison Steadman, Jim Broadbent, Warren Clarke, Sheila Hancock and Peter Cook. The cunning Wendy Sherry thinks that she has control of the garden centre within his grasp (Oracle) (s) (7147).
- 9.00 Framed**. The fourth and final part of Lynda La Plante's drama about a supergrass on the run. Starring Timothy Dalton, Timothy West and David Morrissey. (Oracle) (7383).
- 10.00 News** at Ten with Trevor McDonald and Julia Somerville. (Oracle) Weather (63079) **10.35 LWT News** and weather (608944).
- 10.40 Missing**. The first of a new series presented by Alastair Stewart and Fiona Foster devoted to tracking down missing people (524708).
- 11.40 Old Midnight**. Photo in entertainment hosted by Anastasia Cooke and Samantha Norman (727383).
- 1.05am One to One**. Singer Gloria Estefan talks to Gary Davies (5349548).
- 1.35 Bob Downe Under**. The latest trends in Australia (8366068).
- 2.40 CinemaAbstracts**. Movie news from the United States (393906).
- 3.15 River Power**. Rock video magazine (s) (552026).
- 4.15 The Look in the Mirror**. The third and final part of the French drama serial about a glamorous American photographer in Paris English dialogue (5706884).
- 5.30 ITN Morning News** with Tim Neilson (72345). Ends at 6.00.



Pot shot: Alison Steadman comforts Rufus Sewell (8.00pm)

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Hawthorns ban should not have been made

Police admit they were wrong to ground Gould

By CHRIS MOORE

WEST Midlands Police last night admitted they were wrong to ban Bobby Gould, the Coventry City manager, from attending the FA Cup second-round replay between West Bromwich Albion, his former club, and Wycombe Wanderers on Tuesday.

Gould, who said yesterday that he would be writing to the prime minister to question whether his civil liberties had been infringed, was told by police that his presence at The Hawthorns might have incited crowd trouble.

Last night, however, the police accepted they should not have become involved. "With the benefit of hindsight,

we should not have been drawn into these discussions with West Bromwich Albion," Clive Roche, assistant chief constable of West Midlands Police, said.

"It is not our role to become involved in decisions of this nature and, in future, as far as the West Midlands Police is concerned, Mr Gould or any other manager may attend any match at any time."

The Football Managers' Association has expressed its concern at the second case in two weeks of supporters threatening managers returning to their former clubs. John Bond, the Shrewsbury Town manager, decided not to attend the

FA Cup second-round tie with Burnley at Turf Moor earlier this month after threats from some of the Lancashire club's supporters.

For the replay at Gay Meadow on Tuesday, Bond sat at the back of the Shrewsbury stand disguised as a steward. Gould, who had been due to help with television commentary at The Hawthorns on Tuesday, said: "I am writing to John Major and his minister for sport to find out whether my civil liberties have been infringed. If they have, I will be taking up the matter with my advisers."

Gould, who was dismissed as manager of West Bromwich at the end of last season, received a telephone call from Trevor Summers, the Albion chairman, four hours before the match informing him he was "not welcome" at The Hawthorns.

BSkyB agreed to remove him from the commentary team only after the police had informed Vic Wakefield, the chief executive of Sky Sports, that they were concerned Gould's presence could incite crowd trouble.

"I do not believe the fans would have caused any undue problems," Gould said. "They might have jeered but they are not malicious. Not for one moment did I worry about going back to The Hawthorns for the replay."

"I had nothing to be ashamed of, especially as it was Bob Taylor, who I signed last season, who scored the winning goal to put Albion in the third round."

"In my opinion, the Albion board over-reacted to the whole situation. They have now set a dangerous precedent. How come Ron Atkinson had no problems in going back to Hillsborough, a couple of months after walking out on Sheffield Wednesday, and I am banned from The Hawthorns?"

"I fully support the Football Managers' Association's attempts to try to guarantee that we are not going to be intimidated by clubs or the local police."

Summers said: "The circumstances are that Bobby Gould is a very well paid football manager and it is not as if his living has been cut off or that he is in dire straits. He took a lot of stick while he was manager of Albion and the police thought it in the interests of everyone that he should keep away."

"If he has written to the prime minister, then good luck to him. If everyone in football kept writing to the prime minister whenever they had a problem, the poor chap would have nothing else to do but try and solve our problems."



The cap fits: Gooch was equipped for summer conditions in yesterday's winter sunshine at Lilleshall

England winning Test debate

By ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT

AS THE England cricketers prepare to depart, ten days hence, on a tour top-heavy with one-day games, a determination has emerged to sustain and nourish the traditional, five-day Test match in England.

The Test and County Cricket Board's defiance of the trend towards limited-overs cricket has become increasingly lonely, but nonetheless admirable for that. Yesterday at Lilleshall, Ted Dexter, chairman of the England committee, cycled around the National Sports Centre, watching his players at work before lending his voice to the campaign for real cricket.

There was, perhaps, a veiled acknowledgment of that other campaign in Dexter's remarks about the imbalance of eight one-day internationals to four Tests in India and Sri Lanka. "We would not have wanted a position where we felt we could not put our best one-day side on the field," he said. Thus, Hick and Fairbrother but no Gower.

Dexter, however, warmed quickly to his chosen theme. "We cannot dictate our itineraries to our hosts, hard though we may negotiate. Similarly, they cannot dictate to us when they come to England, and our board has been extremely successful in maintaining the health and volume of Test cricket in this country. We did

experiment with five one-day internationals last summer but that won't be repeated.

"Our chosen balance is six-three in favour of Test cricket and, although other countries have found financial difficulties in this regard, I hope some will soon follow suit and change the emphasis back."

This may seem a pious hope in a week when interminable series of one-day games are proceeding in both Australia and South Africa. I understand, however, that members of the Australian Board, anxious over the direction their game is taking, are examining ways of restoring the pre-eminence of Tests, while the authorities in another country have informally asked their English counterparts for advice on what amounts to a relaunch of the five-day game as a spectator sport.

In England, where Test cricket continues to attract crowds and generate vast revenue, next summer's Ashes series is already being spoken of as a financial bonanza.

Elsewhere, the easy back to be made on an overseas game, especially under lights, has led short-sighted officials to treat Test series as an anachronism that in time might disappear. That attitude is now being regretted.

For this winter, at least, though, it is a case of biting the bullet and taking what is

offered on a tour that is now certain to proceed unless there is a serious deterioration of the religious unrest in India.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) is confident that the itinerary will be as agreed. The executive secretary of the board, P. R. Umrigar, said yesterday: "No alternative schedule has been prepared. Officials will take stock again next Wednesday but they are especially keen for England's visit to proceed because, apart from a lone Test against Sri Lanka two years ago, India has not hosted a full Test series for four years."

Whatever the long-term prospects for Test cricket, it has to be faced that the time when every day of an Indian Test would be played to a full house are long gone.

Even at Eden Gardens in Calcutta, where the series begins on January 29, the atmosphere could be flat for what will be Graham Gooch's hundredth Test. As he also starts the tour on 99 first-class centuries, the landmarks can hardly be ignored but, typically, he said yesterday: "I will only think about it if I get to 90."

Gooch remains as fit and enthusiastic as virtually anyone in his party and is in no mood now to put a date on his retirement. Dexter, however, diverted any talk of him

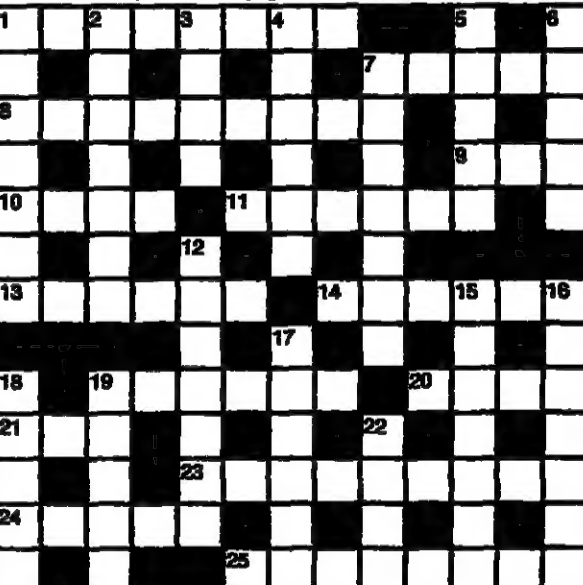
staying on as captain beyond next summer. "Graham must never be rushed on these things," he smiled. "He will tell us when he is ready."

Gooch believes that the Whittingdale-sponsored preparation, spread over six weeks at Lilleshall and ending on the sort of frostbound day most of India has never known, gives him an enviable start. Attention to detail has been impressive, right down to the senior side practising with Indian balls and the A team with the Australian variety.

"As important as anything," Gooch said, "is that we have already created a team spirit. We are not starting from scratch when we get there."

Simmons's triumph, page 34

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 2974



- ACROSS
- Attendance list (4,4)
 - Swelling (5)
 - Lanes illuminations resort (9)
 - Fraudulently manipulate (3)
 - Hurry (4)
 - Wrinkled shell nut (6)
 - Craving (6)
 - Wimbledon game (6)
 - King's son (6)
 - Spirit (4)
 - Everyone (3)
 - Weight (9)
 - Begin working (3,2)
 - Traitor (8)
- DOWN
- Renaissance (7)
 - Working together (7)
 - Encrust (4)
 - Bath sponge (6)
 - Daily (5)
 - Consider carefully (5)
 - Silly mistake (7)
 - Bible "tumbling walls" city (7)
 - Children's room (7)
 - Funds provider (7)
 - Awkward predicament (6)
 - Velvet petal flower (5)
 - Dish (5)
 - Layer (4)

SOLUTIONS TO NO 2973

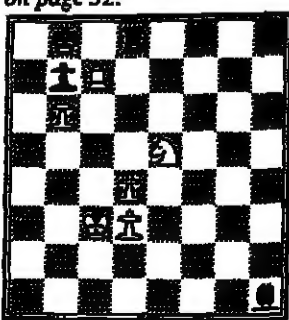
ACROSS: 1 Germ 8 Look over 9 Ballot 10 Shoddy 11 Wiry 12 Numbered 15 Meddames 17 Blot 18 Oliver 21 Motion 22 Columbus 23 Loin

DOWN: 1 Sedative 2 Smelly 3 Platinum 4 Boss 5 Motorcycle 6 Head 13 Mistrust 14 Economic 16 Devout 17 Battle 19 Loom 20 Robe

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WINNING MOVE

In this position from the game Gallagher - Lane, Foreign & Colonial Hastings Masters 1990, Joe Gallagher scored a grandmaster result in this tournament which helped him on his way in the quest for grandmaster title. How did he force immediate victory here? British grandmasters Nunn and Speelman will be among the eight players in the top section at this year's Hastings tournament. Further details from the British Chess Federation on 0424 442500 (Raymond Keene). Solution on page 32.



- By PHILIP HOWARD
- BLASTULA
- A blasted oak
 - An embryo
 - A baseball bat
- FIZGIG
- A one-horse carriage
 - A caricature
 - A police informer
- GLOIRE DE DUON
- A yellow rose
 - A red-hot mustard
 - The troubadour Cantors
- CONSTATIVE
- Coastive
 - Fast soviet
 - With decided prejudices
- Answers on page 32

Taylor offers Wright little hope

By STUART JONES
FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

GRAHAM Taylor yesterday refused to reserve a place in the England side for Ian Wright, who has been charged with misconduct by the Football Association. By implication, the consequences of the case could be more severe for the Arsenal forward than the punishment that may be imposed.

No date has been set for Wright's hearing and, as Gordon Durie, of Tottenham Hotspur, discovered, disciplinary procedures can be annoyingly prolonged. Almost four months after being charged with a different offence but under the same rule, Durie was cleared of feigning injury on Wednesday.

Although Wright is unlikely to have to wait so long for his fate to be decided, any sentence could effectively rule him out of contention for the next World Cup qualifying tie against San Marino at Wembley on February 17.

If Wright is found guilty of aiming a punch at David Howells during the match at White Hart Lane last Saturday, he will probably be

suspended for two or three games. The period of the ban is likely to precede the visit of England's least threatening opponents in group two.

Under the FA's guidelines, any player under domestic suspension cannot be selected for friendly fixtures but is allowed to appear in competitive games. Even if Wright is still serving the ban, he would technically be available but Taylor indicated that leniency might not be shown.

"My contract states that I have total control over team selection except when the FA considers a player, by his behaviour on or off the pitch, not worthy," he said. "We have never gone down that road and it would be a bit unfortunate if we did."

Nor has action been taken retrospectively against miscreants. Tony Adams, the Arsenal captain, regained his England place once he had served a prison sentence for drink-driving.

Taylor, though, reiterated that those chosen to represent the country were responsible for their own deeds. "International players must understand that their behaviour at their clubs is just as impor-

tant as it is for England," Taylor said.

"I happen to agree with the FA's rule governing domestic suspension because it is saying that misbehaviour can cost you your international place. I can't be held responsible for their [the players'] actions."

When asked about the prospect of Wright being idle during the build-up to the game against San Marino, he replied: "That is his problem. Although he insisted that Wright had 'caused me no bother', Arsenal's leading



Wright: FA charge

scorer did not respond well when he was omitted during the 1991 summer tour of the South Pacific. Only in October did he become Alan Shearer's regular partner.

Taylor, who has seen on television the incident involving Howells, has no intention of contacting Wright when he returns from Turkey today. By the time he carries out his next duty, the announcement of his squad in February, he may have decided to redesign England's attack.

David Hirst's opportunities have been consistently limited by injury and, if he is fit, Taylor could bring him in to work with Shearer. Wright's natural fear would be that the new partnership - given the weakness of San Marino, who conceded ten goals against Norway - is almost certain to be productive.

Taylor would inevitably be reluctant to break it up the following month when England play Turkey in Istanbul. With one rash and ill-advised blow, Wright may have punched a hole in his international career and might even have terminated it.

Taylor's year, page 34

Stewart lined up for Lewis

By SRIKUMAR SEN
BOXING CORRESPONDENT

LENNOX Lewis could fulfil his desire to make the first defence of his World Boxing Council title against Alex Stewart if an application to the WBC is successful. Lewis's manager, Frank Maloney, had a long talk yesterday with José Sulaimán, the WBC president, about Lewis defending against Stewart before the No. 1 challenger, Tony Tucker, who is managed by Don King.

Sulaimán asked Maloney to put in a formal application. The WBC, after stripping Riddick Bowe of the title for not agreeing to defend against Lewis, had insisted Lewis make a mandatory defence against Tucker first up.

Maloney is confident that the WBC will agree to his request. Maloney said: "The request will go before the WBC committee and I think we will be able to get Stewart first. We had a very friendly and amicable conversation and he is 100 per cent behind Lewis and his management team and happy to see the title in the hands of a man with dignity."

Sulaimán put his case as to why we should fight Tucker first and I put mine to him about voluntary defence, and Sulaimán replied that if that was Lennox Lewis's wish, the WBC would do all in its power to grant it."

Maloney has already contacted Stewart's backers and they are eager to make the match. Stewart, who is No. 5 in the WBC rankings, is a London-born Jamaican who boxes out of New York. He has met most of the leading contenders, including Mike Tyson, Evander Holyfield, and George Foreman. Tyson had no trouble stopping him, but Holyfield and Foreman had to struggle.

Seth Abraham, the head of HBO, will be coming to London before Christmas to talk to Maloney about a new contract for Lewis. The bout with Stewart could be one of the package if the WBC approves Lewis's application.

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